

THE
EXPERIENCE
OF SEVERAL EMINENT
METHODIST PREACHERS;
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
THEIR CALL TO AND SUCCESS IN THE MINISTRY:
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS, WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES,
TO THE
REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following experiences were first published under the inspection of the late Rev. John Wesley. They were reprinted in this country in the year 1812, and a large edition has been distributed. Having been for some time out of print, and being frequently called for by our agents and others, it has been concluded to print a new edition, not doubting but that its circulation will tend to advance the cause of pure religion, as it was exemplified in the experience and conversation of those men of God.

Nothing, indeed, tends more to confirm the believer "in his most holy faith," than to behold it displayed in the lives of those who have gone before him in the path of piety and Christian charity. Such narratives, detailing the manner of God's working in the souls of men, are peculiarly edifying to those who are "partakers of like precious faith," as well as convincing to a gainsaying world.

Moreover, as the facts contained in the following accounts were published to the world during the lifetime of the writers, and allude to many transactions of a public character, had they been either false or exaggerated, there were multitudes of persons, both friends and enemies, who would have detected the errors. Under the full belief, therefore, that in these narratives we have the simple truth, and nothing but the truth, we commend them to all Christian people, as worthy of their perusal.

N. BANGS.

New-York, Sept., 1835.

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A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF
MR. JOHN PAWSON.

TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. SIR,—I was born at Thorner, near Leeds, in Yorkshire, in the year 1737. My parents were reputable people, belonging to the Church of England; and though strangers to the life and power of religion, would not suffer me to run headlong into the vices of the age, but brought me up in the fear of God, and gave me, according to their ability, a good education. My father, being in the building business, brought me up in the same way: on which I entered in the fifteenth year of my age.

At this time I was serious, and had no desire to follow the multitude to do evil. I attended the service of the Church constantly, and met in a small society of Church people, belonging to the high Church in Hull, where I lived with my brother-in-law. Whether these were acquainted with the power of religion I know not; as I was, at that time, an entire stranger to it myself; yet I did not doubt but all was well with me, and thought if I died I should certainly be happy with God.

About the year 1755 I fell in company with two persons who talked much concerning the people called Methodists. I had then a hatred against them above all others, supposing them to be a weak and wicked people. I condemned them altogether; and had no desire either to hear them preach, or to read any of their writings. But from the account that one of them gave of his wife, who was a Methodist, I began to have a more favourable opinion of them; and thought I should be glad to hear them. Accordingly I went one evening with an intention to hear; but when I came to the door I was ashamed to go in, and so walked round the preaching house, and returned home.

About the year 1756 I began to follow my business at Harewood-house, the seat of Edward Lascelles, Esq. Here I fell in with a company of very wicked young

men; and though I was preserved from following them into gross sin, yet I was now a greater enemy to the Methodists than ever. But, about the year 1758, a young woman, who was a Methodist, lent my father two sermons, preached at the parish church in Leeds, by the late Rev. Henry Crooks, of Hunslet. He read them, and recommended them to me. In reading these I began to see that I was not in a state of salvation. I saw, first, that justification by faith was the doctrine of the Church of England; and, secondly, that the Scripture teaches it as necessary to salvation. I also saw that the Methodists were the people of God, and that they preached no other doctrine than that which I found even in my prayer book.

I now began to spend my leisure hours in reading such books as treat on that subject; and was astonished that I could not see these things before. In the latter end of June I went to Otley to hear a Methodist preach, when I was more surprised than ever. The serious, devout behaviour of the people struck me with a kind of religious awe. The singing greatly delighted me, and the sermon was much blessed to my soul. They suffered me to stay in the society meeting, for which I had great cause to bless God. I returned home full of good resolutions; but little thought what trials were coming upon me. I thought certainly none who love me can be offended at my seeking the salvation of my soul: but I soon found my mistake; for those who had formerly been my greatest friends now became my open enemies. All my relations were exceedingly offended, and threatened me much if I would not leave this way. My uncle, in particular, who before promised to be kind to me, now resolved to leave me nothing; which resolution he made good. My father and mother were exceedingly troubled, supposing me to be totally ruined; and my brothers and sisters were of the same mind; my father threatened many times to turn me out of doors, and entirely to disown me; but the love he had for me (I being his eldest son) moved him to use every means he could think of to prevail on me to forsake this despised people, whom he hated above all others; he mourned to see me "run wilfully to my own ruin." My mother also frequently wept much on my account.

This was indeed a time of great trial to me. My father's threatening to disinherit me did not trouble me at all; but the consideration of the danger their souls were in distressed me exceedingly. I therefore did not regard what I suffered, so my parents might be brought out of their Egyptian darkness. To this end, I bought the best books I could meet with; some of which my father read, but it seemed to no good purpose.

About this time my brother was awakened, and also my younger sister's husband. My eldest sister and her husband likewise began to have a favourable opinion of this way. This made my father more severe with me, supposing I was the occasion of all this mischief. For the present he prevailed on my brother to hear this preaching no more. However, it was not long before he set out in the way of salvation. My father, when he saw he was so far from gaining ground, that he was continually losing it, grew exceeding uneasy, and knew not what course to take. However, he now entered upon a new scheme: he began to be mild and gentle, and to use soft words. He told me I might buy what books I pleased; only I must not go to hear the preaching. I might learn as much, if not more, by reading Mr. Wesley's writings, than by hearing the lay preachers. He said the Methodists being a people so universally hated, it would ruin my character to go among them.

I now found it hard work to withstand my father's good nature. Accordingly, preaching being one Sabbath day near our house, I could not break through.—When it was over I walked into the garden, and wept bitterly. From thence I went into a solitary place, where no one might see me, and bemoaned myself before the Lord. O; the anguish I then felt! I was scarcely able to look up. My father soon found me, and took me into the fields to see the grass and corn. But this could afford me no relief; he was greatly troubled on my account, supposing that I should run distracted. We returned home in time to attend the service of the Church: and in the evening, according to our custom, we read in our own house. When I had done reading, my father seemed to approve of what I read. I was glad, and began to speak to him in as mild a man-

ner as I could ; but he was soon much offended, and said, " I find thou art now entirely ruined. I have used every means I can think of, but all to no purpose. I rejoiced at thy birth, and I once thought thou wast as hopeful a young man as any in this town ; but now I shall have no more comfort in thee as long as I live. Thy mother and I are now grown old, and thou makest our lives quite miserable : thou wilt bring down our gray hairs with sorrow to the grave ; thou intendest to make my house a preaching house, when once my head is laid ; but I shall take care it shall never be thine. No ; I will leave all I have to the poor of the parish, before the Methodists shall have any thing to do with it."

I was exceedingly affected while he spoke in this manner. He then desired me to promise I would hear this preaching no more. I told him (when I could speak for weeping) that if I could see a sufficient reason, I would make him that promise ; but not till then. He replied, " Well, I see thou art quite stupid : I may as well say nothing : the Methodists are the most bewitching people that ever lived ; for when once a person hears them, it is impossible to persuade them to return back again." I then left him, and went to bed ; but my trouble was very great. I was tempted to think I was disobedient to my parents ; but I clearly saw that I must obey God rather than man ; and that I must obey them only so far as was consistent with his will.

My brother and I now began to take sweet counsel together : and we strove to oblige our parents with all our might ; taking particular care that no business was neglected on account of our going to hear the preaching. We frequently prayed together in our bedchamber, and several times my mother got up on the stairs to hearken ; at last she desired to join in prayer with us. Afterward my father listened upon the stairs, and after some time he also desired to join with us.

The minister of the parish now began to be apprehensive that he should lose my father, and with him the whole family. In order to prevent this, he carefully gathered all the false accusations he could hear of against the people, and brought them to my father. He laboured with all his might, both in public and private, to make them appear

detestable; by so doing he created me much trouble. I told my father that these things were entirely false; but he was so provoked that I thought he would make good his former resolution of quite disowning me. However, I thought I would write to him my whole mind: accordingly I began by showing him the wretched state of my soul, and the danger I apprehended to be continually hanging over my head. I then expostulated with him, and asked, "What worse am I in any respect since I heard the Methodists? Am I disobedient to you or my mother in any other thing? Do I neglect any part of my business? Must not every one be accountable to God for himself? Doth our law condemn any man before it hears him, and knows what he doth? Why, then, do you condemn the Methodist preachers, whom you have never heard? If you will hear them only three times, and then prove from the Scripture that they preach contrary thereunto, I will hear them no more." My father read this letter, accepted of the proposals, and accordingly went to hear. He seemed to like the first tolerably well; the second he did not like at all; the third he approved of very much, and went to hear a fourth, which he liked better than all the rest: yet he was not convinced. However, he now began to pray that the Lord would show him the way of salvation. A little after he went, on a Sunday morning, into the stable, where he thought nobody could hear or see him, and prayed earnestly unto the Lord. Here it was that the light of the Holy Spirit broke in upon him: he now had a clear sight of his sinful and lost condition, and was brought into such distress that, like David, he roared for the very disquietness of his soul. He was now ashamed and confounded, and could hardly hope for mercy. This was a day of glad tidings to me: a day which I trust I shall thankfully remember so long as I live. I now had liberty to cast in my lot with the people of God, which I immediately did. My father also invited the preachers to his house. Accordingly, he prevented my turning it into a preaching house, (as he had formerly said,) by doing it himself. From this time we had preaching in our own house, and all the family (which were eight in number) joined the society: this was about January, 1760.

For some time, though I knew myself to be without God in the world, I was dull and unaffected ; and often applied those words to myself :—

“ Still every means in vain I try,
I seek him far and near,
Where'er I come, constrain'd to cry,
My Saviour is not here.
God is in this, in every place,
Yet O how dark and void !
To me 'tis one great wilderness,
This earth without my God.”

About this time the Lord began to revive his work among us : my father having received the preaching into his house, many of our neighbours came to hear : our society also increased, which was matter of great joy to me ; but it was my continual prayer that the Lord would take away the heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh. I cried day and night unto him, that he would give me a broken and a contrite heart, and it was not long ere he inclined his ear. I went to hear the word at a neighbouring village, when, in the beginning of the service, the power of God came mightily upon me and many others. All on a sudden my heart was like melting wax, my soul was distressed above measure.— I cried aloud with an exceeding bitter cry ; the trouble and anguish of spirit that I laboured under far exceeding all description. The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in my flesh, and the poison of them drank up my spirits ; yet, in the height of my distress, I could bless the Lord that he had granted me that which I had so long sought for. I now sought the Lord with my whole heart, and neglected no opportunity of hearing his word, or of waiting upon him in every means of grace ; yet many times I did not hear one half of the sermon, my distress being so exceeding great. I had such a clear sight and deep sense of my exceeding sinfulness that I was humbled in the dust. I daily walked mournfully before the Lord. The things of this world were made quite bitter to me : I could take no delight in any of them, my mind being so occupied with grief for my past sins, and with desire to be delivered from them.— My business became a burden to me : I was quite confused, and brought very low ; so that any one who looked

on me, might see in my countenance the distress of my mind : for I was on the very brink of despair.

One morning as I walked in the fields, bemoaning myself like Ephraim of old, my heart sunk within me like a stone, and I was about to conclude that it was all in vain for me to expect any mercy. But the Lord would not suffer the spirit to fail before him, and the soul which he had made. He revived my drooping heart with that comfortable word, "O tarry thou the Lord's leisure : be strong, and he shall comfort thine heart." I was now, for a season, enabled both to hope and quietly to wait for the salvation of God.

About this time one of my acquaintance was brought to enjoy a clear sense of the love of God, when he had only heard about three sermons. This utterly confounded me : I could in no wise account for it. I did not consider that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years. I thought he was deceived, and that it was impossible he should be converted so soon ; but the next morning the preacher gave public thanks to God on his account. I was then constrained to believe all was well with him. I returned home, and immediately retired into my chamber ; but here I had not sufficient opportunity to give vent to my grief ; I therefore walked into the barn, where I thought no one could see or hear me. Here I prayed, and wept, and roared aloud, my distress being greater than I was well able to bear : yet I was not quite without hope, but expected, vile as I was, that the Lord would at last be gracious unto me. But I was not so private as I supposed ; for I found my brother was in another part of the barn in as great distress as myself ; and my father and mother soon heard our cries and came to us, and in a little time my eldest sister and her husband. We were now six in number, and all in the same distress. I suppose if some of the good Christians of the age had either seen or heard us, they would have concluded we were all quite beside ourselves. However, though the children were brought to the birth, there was not strength to bring forth. I continued destitute of comfort, but steadfastly purposed to abide as at the door of mercy.

One Saturday evening I went to a little village to hear preaching ; and it being a new place, abundance of peo-

ple gathered together. The power of God so accompanied the word, that many began to tremble. There was a mighty shaking among the dry bones, and the power of the Lord was not only present to wound, but to heal also: for this night my father found redemption in the blood of Jesus, and the preacher gave public thanks on his account. When I heard that my father had obtained mercy, I was so far from being able to rejoice with him, that my soul sunk as into the belly of hell. I heard very little of the sermon, but continued kneeling all the time of the service; and after it was ended I still continued trembling, weeping, and crying aloud for mercy. I returned home as well as I was able, for my bodily strength was quite exhausted. My head was as the waters, and mine eyes became as a fountain of tears. I was truly willing to be saved by grace. I was naked, and stripped of all. I had nothing of my own to depend upon for life and salvation. I had nothing to pay; no money or price to bring with me to procure the favour of God.

I passed this night in sorrow and great heaviness, and was glad when the day returned. It was the Lord's day, and the preacher intended to meet our society, in order to wrestle with God in behalf of those who were in distress. I went with a heart full of sorrow, panting after the Lord as the hart after the water brooks. The service began, and the power of God was present in a very wonderful manner: when prayer was made in behalf of those who were in distress, I was bowed upon my knees in the middle of the room, and, if possible, was in greater anguish of spirit than ever before. I heard one whose voice I knew, cry for mercy with all his might, as if he would rend the very heavens. Quickly after, in the twinkling of an eye, all my trouble was gone, my guilt and condemnation were removed, and I was filled with joy unspeakable. I knew by experience that the Lord was merciful to my unrighteousness, and remembered my sins no more. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart; I loved him from an experimental sense of his love to me. O how my soul triumphed in the God of my salvation! This glorious deliverance was wrought by his Holy Spirit, applying those words, "Thou art mine." Some time after my brother told me the words were in the

prophecy of Isaiah : I rose early in the morning and took my Bible, which I opened at random, and they were the first words I cast my eyes upon ! Isaiah xliii, 1. This was a kind of renewal of the promise of God to me, and I was enabled to praise him the more.

The day upon which the Lord brought my soul out of prison, was Sunday, the 16th of March, 1760, which I trust I shall thankfully remember so long as I live. The change passed upon my soul was exceeding great. I was brought out of darkness into marvellous light—out of miserable bondage into glorious liberty—and out of the most bitter distress into unspeakable happiness ! I had not the least doubt of my acceptance with God ; but was fully assured that he was reconciled to me through the merits of his Son, who was now unspeakably precious to my soul. I was also fully satisfied that I was born of God, or renewed in the spirit of my mind, and I could heartily praise the Lord that he had taken that severe method in bringing me home to himself. For by this means my justification was so clear to me that I could neither doubt nor fear : the work of the Spirit of God, in renewing my soul, was also the more conspicuous : and this caused me to prize the liberty into which I was brought, and made me more afraid of being entangled again with the yoke of bondage. I now walked comfortably with God, enjoying sweet communion with him. I could both do and suffer his will with all cheerfulness. Yet Satan soon began to assault me, and laboured to perplex me with evil reasoning ; telling me I should not always have so great a value for God, or for spiritual things, as I now had ; but as I was happy for the present, I did not regard all he could say, knowing that I had nothing to do with hereafter. I had only to live by the faith of the Son of God, who now appeared as altogether lovely.

About six weeks after, the preacher proposed dividing our little society into two classes, and desired me to meet one of them. This was a sore trial to me ; but when he insisted on my doing it, I was obliged to take up the cross. From the first or second time I met it, I continually walked in the light of God's countenance : no creature shared my affections with God ; but I served

him with an undivided heart, I had no distressing temptations, but had constant power over all sin; so that I lived as upon the borders of heaven.

About this time my elder sister and my younger sister's husband were brought into the Christian liberty; and a little after, my mother and younger sister. This gave me fresh cause to bless the Lord for his goodness.

December 28, 1760, the Lord spoke peace to my brother while I was praying with him. Now I had more cause to praise the Lord than before. My brother had laboured for a whole year in sore distress of mind, and was many times brought to the brink of despair. I do not remember to have seen any one in the like circumstances for so long a time. But God broke all his bonds asunder, and caused him to walk in the light of his countenance.

We now began to have a public meeting for prayer every Sunday evening; but had no person among us who could give a word of exhortation. This troubled me much; for I was afraid the people would grow weary of coming together, if we continued only to sing and pray, as they were obliged to stand or kneel all the time. I thought it would be much better to read a sermon to them, that they might sit down a little. Accordingly I got the homilies of the Church, which were entirely new to the people. These I read, and as I was able, explained; in doing which I found great liberty. This proved a blessing to many. But the minister of the parish (being an open enemy to all that is good) began to be offended, and laboured to prejudice the people against me. He seemed not to regard what he said either in public or private, if by any means he could turn the people aside. But they did not regard him; nay, the more he said, the less they liked him; so that when he saw he could prevail nothing, he determined to leave the town, which in a little time he accordingly did. When I had read the most profitable of the homilies, I took Mr. Burkitt on the New Testament, and read many particular passages therein, and enlarged where I thought it needful.

After this I began to take the Bible itself, and in my poor manner expounded part of a chapter from time to time: and, notwithstanding my insufficiency, much good

was done. But this exposed me to fresh trials : the people from the neighbouring societies began to invite me to go and give them a word of exhortation ; but, as I well knew my own weakness, I absolutely refused. But the assistant prevailed on me to go to a neighbouring town on a Sunday evening. The people, whether I would or not, thrust me into the pulpit. I trembled exceedingly : however, I spoke as well as I could, and the same evening returned home, greatly ashamed of what I had said. I was in hopes they would trouble me no more : but so far was I deceived in this, that about Lady-day, 1762, the assistant employed me among the local preachers. I now knew not what course to take : yet I durst not decline the work. However, I was almost determined to remove into some distant part of the country ; but the love I had for the society to which I belonged would not suffer me. I was, therefore, obliged to do what I could, and I found God was with me.

In August following, the conference was at Leeds, and the assistant desired me to attend ; I took up my cross, and went. Several young men were proposed as candidates for travelling preachers, and I among the rest.—When you, sir, asked me if I was willing to give up myself to the work, I told you I was conscious of my inability, but if you and the brethren thought good to make trial of me, I should deliver myself up to you. Accordingly, I was ordered for the York circuit. When I was gone, God raised up my brother to take my place, who was soon as well beloved by the people as I had been. I had till now met a few people in Harewood, where I had followed my business. I had suffered much in my mind on their account, as I had no hope of any settled preaching there. As all the town belonged to one gentleman, I thought he would never suffer it ; and, as no one could receive the preachers without his consent, my labour would be in vain. The few people here were also much cast down when they heard I was going to leave them. But after my removal I was invited to preach among them, which I accordingly did to a multitude who came together ; and from that time they have had the Gospel preached among them ; and, to the great surprise of many, without any of that opposition they so much expected.

I now entered upon my circuit. Here the assistant behaved to me with all the tenderness of a parent, and the other preachers acted, in their places, in like manner: the people not only bore with my weakness, but seemed glad to see me wherever I came; and I often found myself unspeakably blessed in speaking to them. I desired nothing more than to glorify God with my body and spirit, which I knew he had redeemed. Yet I met with many trials from various quarters. And in many places the pressgangs attended our preaching, and threatened what they would do; but the Lord restrained them. In other places we had much persecution, especially in Beverly, where the magistrates absolutely refusing to do us justice, we seldom could preach with any degree of satisfaction to ourselves, or those who desired to hear us. When we complained against three young men who disturbed us much, and they were brought before the mayor and aldermen, they said the information was insufficient, being only signed by myself. The mayor then insisted that I had been examined upon oath before him, and that, having sworn to men that I did not know, he would indict me for perjury, and send me to York castle. When they would permit me to speak, I told them that I was so far from having taken a false oath, that I had taken no oath at all; that there were now present three very sufficient witnesses, who would all make oath, if it was required, that neither I nor any other person had taken any oath on the occasion. When they heard this, they began to be a little more calm; but, as they were determined to do us no justice, we quietly withdrew. However, the work of God prospered much in those parts this year: many joined the society, and many found redemption in the blood of Jesus.

The next year I and three others were ordered into the Haworth circuit. We found the people in those parts in a very languishing condition. There seemed a universal mourning for the loss of that eminent servant of God, Mr. Grimshaw, who died the year before. Many said, Farewell to all prosperity in these parts; the work of God will come to nothing. But, to our unspeakable comfort, there was a blessed revival; the society was exceedingly quickened and enlarged; and it was thought

there was more good done in this one year than in four years put together before.

In August, 1764, I was ordered for Norwich. Here the congregations were in general very large, while our society increased considerably. But during the winter we had almost continual mobbing. The rioters frequently broke the windows, interrupted us in preaching, and abused the people when service was ended. We made complaint to the mayor, but he would not do us justice; which encouraged the rioters, and led them to commit still greater outrages.

I was now removed to Colchester for a season, when preaching had just begun in a place about six miles from it. Here they did not treat us in a friendly manner: the mob, being encouraged by the Church wardens, were exceeding violent. They assembled in great numbers before the house, having got a drum and a large quantity of horns, with which they made such a prodigious noise that the people could not hear. Meantime the constable and Church wardens came into the house, and asked me if I would go with them to the quarter sessions the next day. I told them I would. They said, Then we need not show you the justice's order. I then desired our friends to bring my horse. They said, You had better walk to the end of the town. I did so: the mob gave me a free passage, but followed me, beating the drum, sounding their horns, and shouting with all their might. I walked slowly down the street before them, in great peace and tranquillity of mind. When we came to the bridge, at the end of the town, I stopped till my horse came. They now encompassed me on every side, yet none of them struck me, or so much as cast any dirt or stones at me, although I had no man with me. But, after I was gone, they abused the poor people who had come from Colchester with me very much.

The next day I appeared at the sessions. The principal justice was a clergyman, belonging to the cathedral in Canterbury, a very candid, sensible gentleman. He said he would not have me think he had sent for me by way of persecution: but as complaint had been made to him by the Church wardens and other of the inhabitants of Nayland, that certain strangers, who acted in the capacity

of preachers, had come at unseasonable hours in the night, and made very great disturbance in the town ; he, as one of his majesty's justices of the peace, was obliged to inquire into it, and therefore required me to answer to certain questions drawn up in writing. He read the questions, and I answered them, so that he was quite satisfied, and promised that we should have peace for the time to come ; but hoped we would forgive all that was past.

In a little time I returned to Norwich, where I spent the remaining part of the year in great peace. We were obliged to preach in the open air all that summer. We had also a good prospect of a revival of the work of God in Yarmouth, having procured a convenient chapel, which had been built for the Anabaptists. We had abundance to hear from time to time, and much good was likely to have been done : but one of our leaders, turning Calvinist, sowed such discord among the society, that nothing but confusion followed ; the people scattered so effectually that the wound then given could never be healed.

From thence I went to Birstal, in Yorkshire, and spent a year with much satisfaction, my own soul being frequently comforted while the work of God in a good measure revived.

The two following years I spent in Lancashire, the first of which was exceeding agreeable : only the death of my dear fellow labourer, Paul Greenwood, exceedingly affected me. On the one hand, I mightily rejoiced that so dear a servant of God was taken to his reward ; and on the other, I mourned bitterly at the loss of so dear a friend. The last year I spent in these parts was a time of great trial on various accounts.

From Lancashire I went to Staffordshire, and stayed only one year. But I had the satisfaction to see the work of God greatly revive : many new societies were raised, and a considerable number of the old ones were quickened and established.

The two following years I spent in London, with some degree of satisfaction both to myself and others ; but cannot say much concerning the success of my labours here.

From London I went to Bristol, where I continued

three years. I have reason to bless God that my poor labours were acceptable, and I hope, in some measure, useful to the people.

The four following years I spent about Leeds and Birstal, in Yorkshire. In the latter of these there was a very great revival of religion. Hundreds of sinners were awakened and turned from the evil of their ways; and many received a comfortable assurance of the favour of God.

From Yorkshire I am again returned to London. What successes, trials, or comforts I may meet with, I know not; but I am still determined to continue at my Master's feet, that he may fulfil in me all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

With regard to the Arminian controversy, although I have frequently heard the Calvinists preach, and also read many of their writings, yet I never had the least doubt of Christ's tasting death for every man, or of his willingness to save to the uttermost all who come unto God through him.

I am, Rev. Sir, yours, &c.,

JOHN PAWSON.

A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF

MR. JOHN HAIME.

TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. SIR,—I was born at Shaftsbury, Dorsetshire, in 1710. My father followed gardening, and brought me up to the same employment for several years, but I did not like it, and longed for some business that would allow me more liberty. In the mean time I was very undutiful to my parents, and much given to cursing, swearing, lying, and Sabbath breaking. But I was not easy in this way, being often afraid that the devil would carry me away.

I was then placed with my uncle to learn to make buttons. I liked this well at first, but was soon tired of

it. However, I stayed out the year. But my uncle then removing to Blandford, I was out of business. I wrought in many places, but stayed in none ; being like a troubled sea, that cannot rest. After some time I went to my uncle, at Blandford, and wrought with him about a quarter of a year. But still I found no satisfaction in any thing, neither in working, eating, drinking, nor even in sleeping ; though neither I myself, nor any of my acquaintance could imagine what was the matter with me.

Some time after, as I was working alone, the devil broke in upon me with reasonings concerning the being of a God, till my senses were almost gone. He then so strongly tempted me to blaspheme God, that I could not withstand. He then told me, "Thou art inevitably damned." And I readily believed him. For I thought, though I have not cursed God outwardly, yet he looketh to the heart. This consideration made me sink into despair, as a stone into the mighty waters.

I now began to wander about by the river side, and through woods and solitary places, many times looking up to heaven with a heart ready to break, thinking I had no part there. I thought every one happy but myself : the devil continually telling me there was no mercy for me. Yet I thought it was hard to be banished for ever from the presence of a merciful God. I cried to him for help ; but I found no relief ; it seemed to be all in vain. So I said, like the men of Judah, *There is no hope* ; and then gave the reins to my evil desires, not caring which end went foremost, but giving myself up again to wicked company, and all their evil ways.

If at any time I grew uneasy again, I stifled it by drinking, swearing, card playing, lewdness, and the like works of darkness, which I then pursued with all greediness. And I was hastening on when the great, tremendous God, met me as a lion in the way, and his Holy Spirit, whom I had been so long grieving, returned with greater force than ever. I had no rest day or night. I was afraid to go to bed, lest the devil should fetch me away before morning. I was afraid to shut my eyes, lest I should awake in hell. I was terrified when asleep ; sometimes dreaming that many devils were in the room, ready to take me away ; sometimes

that the world was at an end, and I was not ready to appear before the Judge of quick and dead. At other times I thought I saw the world on fire, and the wicked left to burn therein, with myself among them, and when I awoke my senses were almost gone.

I was often on the point of destroying myself, and was stopped, I know not how. Then did I weep bitterly: I moaned like a dove; I chattered like a swallow. But I thought, though my anguish is very great, it is not like those who are lifting up their eyes in torments. Then, for a few moments, I felt thankfulness to God. But still the thoughts of death and judgment followed me close for upward of two years, till all my bodily strength was gone. Returning home one day, and sitting down in a chair, my mother, observing my pale look and low voice, asked, "What is the matter with you?" But I durst not tell her: so I turned it off.

One night, as I was going to bed, I durst not lie down without prayer. So, falling upon my knees, I began to consider, "What can I pray for? I have neither the will nor the power to do any thing good." Then it darted into my mind, "I will not pray; neither will I be beholden to God for mercy." I arose from my knees without prayer; and laid me down; but not in peace. I never had such a night before. I was as if my very body had been in a fire: and I had a hell in my conscience. I was thoroughly persuaded the devil was in the room; and I fully expected every moment that he would be let loose upon me. I judged myself to be one of the worst creatures that God ever made. I thought I had sinned beyond the reach of mercy. Yet all this time I kept to the church, though I was often afraid to go, lest the church or the tower should fall upon me.

In spring I was employed by a tanner, to go with his carriage, and fetch dried bark. As I was returning by myself, I was violently tempted to blaspheme, yea, and hate God: till, at length, having a stick in my hand, I threw it toward heaven, against God, with the utmost enmity. Immediately I saw in the clear element a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black, part brown. It flew at me, and went just over my head. Then it went about forty yards, lighted on the ground,

and stood staring upon me. This was in a clear day, about twelve o'clock: I strove to pray, but could not. At length God opened my mouth. I hastened home, praying all the way, and earnestly resolving to sin no more. But I soon forgot my resolution, and multiplied my sins as the sands on the sea shore.

To complete all, I enlisted myself for a soldier, in the queen's regiment of dragoons. When we marched for Gloucester, on Christmas day, in the morning, 1739, the thoughts of parting with all my friends, my wife and children, were ready to break my heart. My sins likewise came all to my remembrance, and my troubles increased night and day. Nevertheless, when I became acquainted with my comrades, I soon returned as a dog to his vomit. Yet God soon renewed my good desires. I began to read, and pray, and go to church every day. But frequently I was so tempted there, that it was as much as I could do to avoid blaspheming loud. Satan suggested, "Curse him! curse him!" perhaps a hundred times. My heart as often replied, "No! no! no!" Then he suggested, "Thou hast sinned against the Holy Ghost." But I still cried unto God, though the deep waters flowed over me, and despair closed me in on every side.

Soon after we marched to camp at Kingsclear, in Hampshire. Thence we removed to winter quarters at Farringdon. I was still deeply miserable through sin; but not conqueror over it. This was still my language:—

"Here I repent, and sin again:
Now I revive, and now am slain!
Slain with the same unhappy dart,
Which O! too often wounds my heart!"

After this I quartered at Highworth, in Wiltshire. Among many old books which were here, I found one entitled, "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners." I read it with the utmost attention, and found his case nearly resembled my own. Having soon after orders to march for Scotland, we marched the first day to Banbury, where I found again in a bookseller's shop, "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners." I bought it, and thought it the

best book I ever saw: and again I felt some hope of mercy. In every town where we stayed I went to Church. But I did not hear what I wanted. "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

Being come to Alnwick, Satan desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat. And the hand of the Lord came upon me with such weight as made me roar for very anguish of spirit. I could truly say, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me; the poison thereof drinketh up my spirits." Many times I stopped in the street, afraid to go one step farther, lest I should step into hell. Then I cried unto the Lord, and said, "Why hast thou set me as a mark? Let loose thy hand and cut me off, that I sin no more against thee." I said, "Is thy mercy clean gone for ever? And must I perish at the last? Save, Lord, or I perish!" But there was no answer. So all hope was cut off.

I now read, and fasted, and went to Church, and prayed seven times a day. One day as I walked by the Tweed side, I cried out aloud, being all athirst for God, "O that thou wouldst hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before thee!" The Lord heard: he sent a gracious answer: he lifted me up out of the dungeon. He took away all my sorrow and fear, and filled my soul with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The stream glided sweetly along, and all nature seemed to rejoice with me. I was truly free; and had I had any to guide me, I need never more have come into bondage. But I was so ignorant, I thought I should know war no more. I began to be at ease in Zion, and forgot to watch and pray, till God laid his hand upon me again. I then again went mourning all the day long: till one Sunday, as I was going to Church, I stood like a condemned criminal before his judge, and said, "Lord, what am I going to Church for? I have nothing to bring or offer thee, but sin and a deceitful heart." I had no sooner spoke than my heart melted within me, and I cried earnestly to him for mercy, till my strength failed me, and it was with difficulty I could walk out of the room.

The next morning as I was going to water my horse, just as he entered the river, in a moment I felt the love of God flowing into my soul. Instantly all pain and sorrow

fled away. No fear of hell or the devil was left; but love to God and all mankind now filled my ravished soul. As the people with whom I quartered had often the Bible and other good books in their hands, I told them what God had done for my soul: but they understood me not. However, I doubted not but my comrade would rejoice with me, being counted a religious man. But I was disappointed again. His answer was, "Take care; for Satan can transform himself into an angel of light." Thus finding none who was able to give me any instruction or direction, I soon got into unprofitable reasonings, which damped my fervour, so that in a little time I was again in heaviness.

Soon after I was sent with the camp equipage to London. The next day I marched for Leith. I had scarce set out, when God was pleased to reveal himself in a most comfortable manner to my soul. And my comfort increased all the day, so that I hardly knew how I went. We waited for the ship seven days. During this time I was off my watch again: so that before we sailed I was weak, and like another man. For two days we had pleasant weather: but on the third the wind suddenly rose, attended with furious rain. The seas frequently covered the ship, and, in the midst of our distress, broke into the main hatches. I was not (as Jonah) *asleep in the sides of the ship*, but was just at my wit's end. I prayed with many tears, expecting every moment the sea to be my grave. I was grieved that I had so abused the goodness of God, and troubled beyond expression. The storm lasted two days and two nights: then God was pleased to still the winds and seas.

At our arrival in London I was somewhat refreshed in spirit, being truly thankful that I was out of hell. But I was soon in the depth of despair again, afraid of dropping into hell every moment. Soon after, I went to hear Mr. Cennick, (then one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers,) at Deptford. Coming back, I told him the distress of my soul. He said, "The work of the devil is upon you," and rode away! It was of the tender mercies of God, that I did not put an end to my life. I cried, O Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear!

Yet I thought, if I must be damned myself, I will do

what I can that others may be saved. So I began to reprove open sin, whenever I saw or heard it, and to warn the ungodly that if they did not repent they would surely perish. But if I found any that were weary and heavy laden, I told them to wait upon the Lord, and he would renew their strength. Yet I found no strength myself, till reading one day in what manner God manifested himself to Mr. Cennick, I cried out, "Lord, if there be any mercy for me, reveal it to me!" I was answered by so strong an impression on my heart, as left me without a doubt, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Immediately my soul melted within me, and I was filled with joy unspeakable.

Having joined my regiment again, we marched to Colchester. Here I found much peace and communion with God, which humbled me to the dust. Our next remove was to Brentford, where I had the happiness of hearing Mr. Charles Wesley preach. When the service was over I had a great desire of speaking to him, but knew not how to be so bold. Yet, taking courage, I ventured to tell him my situation of mind. He gave me much encouragement, and bid me go on and not fear, neither be dismayed at any temptation. His words sunk deep, and were a great blessing to me for several years after.

Soon after we had an order to march for Flanders. This threw me into fresh reasoning. The thought of leaving my country, and the dangers ensuing by sea and by land, sat heavy upon my spirit. I soon lost my peace, nay, and my hope too. I knew I had "tasted of the good word, and of the powers of the world to come." Yet this gave me no comfort. Nay, it aggravated my sorrow, to think of losing all that God had done for me. But the more I struggled the deeper I sunk, till I was quite swallowed up of sorrow. And though I called upon God, yea, with strong cries and tears, yet for a long time I had no comfortable answer.

For a long time I was so dejected and confused that I had no heart to keep a regular account of any thing. In this state I was when we embarked for Flanders, in June, 1742, and as long as we stayed there. It was on February the 18th, 1743, that we began our march from Ghent to Germany. When I came to my quarters my heart was

ready to break, thinking I was upon the very brink of hell. We halted six days, and then marched again. The day following, as soon as I had mounted my horse, the love of God was shed abroad in my heart. I knew God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven all my sins, and felt, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." This I enjoyed about three weeks, but then lost it, by grieving the Holy Spirit of God. I then walked about, much cast down, and knew not what to do. But, April 22d, the Lord showed me that I did not live as became the Gospel of Christ. I was greatly ashamed before God. In the evening as I was walking in the fields, with a heavy heart, I prayed earnestly to God that he would smite the rock, and cause the waters to flow. He answered my prayer. My head was as waters, and my eyes as a fountain of tears. I wept; I sung. I had such a sense of the love of God, as surpasses all description. Well might Solomon say, "Love is strong as death." Now I saw I had "a right to the tree of life:" and knew, if I then put off the body, I should enter into life eternal.

Feeling I wanted help both from God and man, I wrote to Mr. Wesley: who sent me a speedy answer, as follows:—

"It is a great blessing whereof God has already made you a partaker: but if you continue waiting upon him you shall see greater things than these. This is only the beginning of the kingdom of heaven, which he will set up in your heart. There is yet behind the fulness of the mind that was in Christ, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is but a little thing that men should be against you, while you know God is on your side. If he gives you any companion in the narrow way, it is well; and it is well if he does not. So much the more will he teach, and strengthen you by himself: he will instruct you in the secret of your heart. And by and by he will raise up, as it were, out of the dust, those who shall say, 'Come, and let us magnify his name together.' But by all means miss no opportunity. Speak and spare not; declare what God has done for your soul; regard not worldly prudence. Be not ashamed of Christ, or of his word, or of his work, or of his servants. Speak the truth in love, even in the midst of a crooked generation; and all things shall

work together for good, until the work of God is perfect in your soul."

We now marched on through a pleasant country ; and my soul was full of peace. I did speak, and not spare, with little interruption. Only at one time, when I was speaking of the goodness of God, one of our officers, (and one that was accounted a very religious man !) told me, "I deserved to be cut in pieces, and to be given to the devil." But I was enabled (blessed be God !) to love, pity, and pray for him.

After a long and tiresome march we arrived at Dettingen. Here we lay in camp for some time, very near the French : only the river Mayne ran between us. June 16, I was ordered out on the grand guard with all expedition. When we came to the place appointed, I saw many of the French army marching on the other side of the river. It was not long before I heard the report of a French cannon. I said, "We shall have a battle to-day ;" but my comrades did not believe me. Presently I heard another, and then a third ; the ball came along by us. Many of the French had crossed the river, and many more were in full march toward it. We had orders to return with all speed. The firing increased very fast : and several were killed or wounded ; some by the cannon balls, some by the limbs of the trees which the balls cut off. Meantime we marched on one side of the river ; part of the French army on the other. The battle was soon joined with small arms, as well as cannon, on both sides. It was very bloody ; thousands on each side were sent to their long home. I had no sooner joined the regiment than my left-hand man was shot dead. I cried to God, and said, "In thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded !" My heart was filled with love, peace, and joy, more than tongue can express. I was in a new world. I could truly say, "Unto you that believe he is precious." I stood the fire of the enemy seven hours. And when the battle was over, I was sent out with a party of men to find the baggage wagons, but returned without success. In the meanwhile the army was gone and I knew not which way. I went to the field where the battle was fought ; but such a scene of human misery did I never behold ! It was enough to melt the most obdurate heart. I knew not now which

way to take, being afraid of falling into the hands of the enemy. But as it began to rain hard, I set out, though not knowing where to go; till hearing the beat of a drum, I went toward it, and soon rejoined the army.— But I could not find the tent to which I belonged, nor persuade them to take me in at any other. So, being very wet and much fatigued, I wrapped me up in my cloak, and lay down and fell asleep. And though it still rained hard upon me, and the water ran under me, I had as sweet a night's rest as ever I had in my life.

We had now to return from Germany to Flanders, to take up our winter quarters. In our march we were some time near the river Mayne, twenty miles from the field of battle. We saw the dead men lie in the river, and on the bank, *as dung for the earth*. Many of the French, attempting to pass the river, after we had broken down the bridge, were drowned; and many cast upon the banks, where there were none to bury them.

Being in Ghent, I went one Sunday morning to the English church at the usual time. But neither minister nor people came. As I was walking in the church, two men belonging to the train came in, John Evans and Pitman Stag. One of them said, "The people are long in coming." I said, "Yet they think, however they live, of going to heaven when they die. But most of them, I fear, will be sadly disappointed." They stared at me, and asked what I meant. I told them, "Nothing unholy can dwell with a holy God." We had a little more talk, and appointed to meet in the evening. I found John Evans a strict Pharisee, *doing justly*, and *loving mercy*, but knowing nothing of *walking humbly with his God*. But the cry of Pitman Stag was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" We took a room without delay, and met every night to pray and read the Holy Scriptures. In a little time we were as speckled birds, as *men wondered at*. But some began to listen under the window, and soon after desired to meet with us. Our meetings were soon sweeter than our food: and I found therein such an enlargement of soul, and such an increase in spiritual knowledge, that I resolved to go, come life, come death.

We had now twelve joined together, several of whom had already found peace with God; the others were ear-

nestly following after it : and it was not long before they attained. Hereby new love and zeal were kindled in us all : and although Satan assaulted us various ways, yet were we enabled to discern all his wiles, and to withstand all his power. Several of them are now safely landed on the blissful shore of a glorious immortality ; where, as a weather-beaten bark, worn out with storms, may I at last happily arrive, and find the children whom God has been graciously pleased to give me through the word of his power !

One night, after our meeting, I told the people we should have the room full before we left the city. We soon increased to about twenty members. And love increased so that shame and fear vanished away. Our singing was heard afar off, and we regarded not those who made no account of our labours. Such was the increase of our faith, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, that we had no barren meetings. Such our love to each other that even the sight of each other filled our hearts with Divine consolation. And as love increased among us, so did convictions among others ; and in a little time we had a society. So that now (as I had told them before) the room was too small to hold the people.

May 1, 1744, we marched from Ghent, and encamped near Brussels. Our camp lay on the side of a hill : we set up our standing on a hill just opposite. We were easily heard by the soldiers in the camp, who soon began to *fly as a cloud*, and *as doves to the windows*. Here I gathered together my scattered sheep and lambs. They were the joy of my heart, and I trust to find them again among that *great multitude that no man can number*. O what a work did God put into my hands ! And who is sufficient for these things ? But God had given me such faith that had I continued steadfast in the grace of God, neither things present, nor things to come, nor any creature, could have hindered my growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, unto my dying hour.

I took great delight in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. I read it over and over, and prayed much for faith. This was first in the day, and last at night in my mind : and I had no more doubt of the promises contained therein, than if God had called to me from heaven, and

said, "This is my word, and it shall stand for ever."—When I began preaching, I did not understand one text in the Bible, so as to speak from it in (what is called) a regular manner, yet I never wanted either matter or words. So hath God, in all ages, "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." I usually had a thousand hearers, officers, common soldiers, and others. Was there ever so great a work before, in so abandoned an army! But we can only say there is nothing too hard for God! He worketh what, and by whom he pleaseth.

I was now put to a stand. I had so much duty to do, the society to take care of, and to preach four or five times a day, that it was more than I could well perform. But God soon took care for this also. I looked for no favour from man: I wanted nothing from man: I feared nothing: God so increased my love and zeal. Light and heat filled my soul, and it was my meat and drink to do the will of my heavenly Father. I cried earnestly to him to clear my way, and remove all hinderances. Glory be to his name, he did so: for two years after this time, I was entirely at my liberty. I found means of hiring others to do my duty, which proved an unspeakable advantage. The work was great before; but we soon found a greater increase of it than ever. If Christianity consists in love and obedience to God, and love to all men, friends and enemies, we had now got a Christian society: we had the good land in possession. But this was not enough: still there was as earnest a cry in our souls for all the mind which was in Christ, as there was in David for *the water of the well of Bethlehem*.

Our general method was, as soon as we were settled in any camp, to build a tabernacle, containing two, three, or four rooms, as we saw convenient. One day three officers came to see our chapel, as they called it. They asked many questions: one in particular asked me what I preached? I answered, "I preach against swearing, whoring, and drunkenness, and exhort men to repent of all their sins, that they may not perish." He began swearing horribly, and said, if it was in his power, he would have me whipped to death. I told him, "Sir, you have a commission over men, but I have a commission from God

to tell you that you must either repent of your sins, or perish everlastingly." He went away, and I went on, being never better than when I was preaching or at prayer, for the Lord gave such a blessing to his word, that I thought every discourse lost, under which no one was either convicted or converted to God.

We had now three hundred in the society, and six preachers, beside myself. It was therefore no wonder that many of the officers and chaplains endeavoured to stop the work. But it was altogether lost labour: He that sitteth in heaven laughed them to scorn. And I doubt not but he would have given me strength to have suffered death, rather than have given them up.

It was reported by many that I was utterly distracted. Others endeavored to incense the field marshal against me. I was examined several times; but, blessed be God, he *stood by me*, and encouraged me to go on, to *speak* and *not hold my peace*; neither did he suffer *any man to set upon me to hurt me*. And so great was my love and joy in believing, that it carried me above all those things which would otherwise have been grievous to flesh and blood, so that all was pleasant to me:—

"The winter's night and summer's day
Fled imperceptibly away."

I frequently walked between twenty and thirty miles a day; and preached five and thirty times in the space of seven days. So great was my love to God, and to the souls which he hath purchased with his own blood. Many times I have forgotten to take any refreshment for ten hours together. I had at this time three armies against me: the French army, the wicked English army, and an army of devils. But I feared them not: for my *life was hid with Christ in God*. He supported me through all: and I trust will be my God and my guide even unto death.

While the work of God thus flourished among the English, he visited also the Hanoverian army. A few of them began to meet together; and their number daily increased. But they were quickly ordered to meet no more. They were very unwilling to desist. But some of them being severely punished, the rest did not dare to disobey. It is clear the devil and the world will suffer a man to be any thing, but a real Christian!

My present comrade was an extremely wicked man. He came home one day, cursing and swearing that he had lost his money; he searched for it, and after some time found it. He threw it on the table and said, "There is my ducat: but no thanks to God, any more than to the devil." I wrote down the words, and complained to our commanding officer. After a few days he was tried by a court martial. The officer asked what I had to say against him? I gave him the words in writing. When he read them, he asked me if I was not ashamed to take account of such matters as this? I answered, "No, sir: if I had heard such words spoken against his majesty King George, would not you have counted me a villain if I had concealed them?" His mouth was stopped, and the man cried for pardon. The captain told him he was worthy of death, by the law of God and man: and asked me, "What I desired to have done?" I answered, I desired only to be parted from him, and I hoped he would repent. Orders were given that we should be parted. This also was a matter of great thankfulness.

From camp we removed to our winter quarters at Bruges. Here we had a lively society: but our preaching room was far too small to contain the congregation. There was a very spacious place appointed for the public worship of our army, commonly called the English Church. General Sinclair was now our commanding officer. I went to his house, and begged leave to speak to him. He told me, if I had business with him, I should have sent my captain, and not come to him myself. I told him I had the liberty of speaking to the Duke of Cumberland. He then asked me what I wanted? I said, "Please your honour, I come to beg a great favour; that I may have the use of the English church to pray in, and exhort my comrades to flee from the wrath to come." He was very angry, and told me I should not preach or pray anywhere but in the barracks. He asked, "But how came you to preach?" I said, "The Spirit of God constrains me to call my fellow sinners to repentance." He said, "Then you must restrain that Spirit." I told him, "I would die first." He said, "You are in my hand," and turned away in a great rage.

I cried to the Lord for more faith, that I might never

deny him, whatsoever I was called to suffer ; but might own him before men and devils : and very soon after God removed this hinderance out of the way ; General Sinclair was removed from Bruges, and General Ponsonby took his place. I went to his house, and was without difficulty admitted to his presence. Upon his asking what I wanted, I said, " I beg your honour will grant us the use of the English church, that we may meet together and worship God." He asked, " What religion are you of?" I answered, " Of the Church of England." Then, said he, " You shall have it." I went to the clerk for the keys ; but he said, " The chaplain forbade it, and I should not have them." The general then gave me an order under his hand. So they were delivered. I fixed up advertisements in several parts of the town, " Preaching every day at two o'clock, in the English church." And we had every day a numerous congregation, both of soldiers and townsfolk.

We had some good singers among us, and one, in particular, who was a master of music. It pleased God to make this one great means of drawing many to hear his word. One Sunday the clerk gave out a psalm. It was sung in a hymn tune ; and sung so well that the officers and their wives were quite delighted with it. The society then agreed to go all together to Church every Sunday. On the next Sunday we began. And when the clerk gave out the first line of the psalm, one of us set the tune, and the rest followed him. It was a resemblance of heaven upon earth. Such a company of Christian soldiers singing together, with the spirit and the understanding also, gave such life to the ordinance, that none but the most vicious and abandoned could remain entirely unaffected.

The spring following we took the field again : and on May 11, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith at Fontenoy. Some days before, one of our brethren standing at his tent door, broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand ; and when he went into the battle declared, " I am going to rest in the bosom of Jesus." Indeed, this day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to show them his mighty power. They showed such courage and boldness in the fight as made the officers as

well as the soldiers amazed. When wounded, some cried out, "I am going to my Beloved." Others, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." And many that were not wounded earnestly desired *to be dissolved and to be with Christ*. When W. Clements had his arm broke by a musket ball, they would have carried him out of the battle. But he said, "No: I have an arm left to hold my sword: I will not go yet." And when a second shot broke his other arm, he said, "I am as happy as I can be out of paradise." John Evans having both his legs taken off by a cannon ball, was laid across a cannon to die: where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God and blessing him with joyful lips.

For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for above seven hours. But I told my comrades, "The French had no ball made that will kill me this day." After about seven hours, a cannon ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, "Haime! where is your God now?" I answered, "Sir, he is here with me; and he will bring me out of this battle." Presently a cannon ball took off his head. My horse fell upon me, and some cried out, "Haime is gone!" But I replied, "He is not gone yet." I soon disengaged myself, and walked on, praising God. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse; but that did not discourage me at all: for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. And all the way multitudes lay bleeding, groaning, dying, or just dead. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace; but it did not singe a hair of my head. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me. I was as full of joy as I could contain. As I was quitting the field, I met one of our brethren, with a little dish in his hand, seeking water. I did not know him at first, being covered with blood. He smiled and said, "Brother Haime, I have got a sore wound." I asked, "Have you got Christ in your heart?" He said, "I have; and I have had him all this day." I have seen many good and glorious days, with much of the power of God. But I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all his mercies! Among the dead, there was great plenty of watches, and gold, and silver.

One asked me, Will not you get something? I answered, "No, I have got Christ, I will have no plunder."

But the greatest loss I sustained was that of my fellow labourers. William Clements was sent to the hospital, John Evans, brothers Bishop and Greenwood were killed in the battle. Two others, who used to speak boldly, fell into Antinomianism. So I was left alone: but I was persuaded, this also was for my good. And seeing iniquity so much abound, and the love of many waxing cold, it added wings to my devotion. And my faith grew daily, as a tree planted by the water side.

One of those Antinomian preachers professed to be always happy, but was frequently drunk twice a day. One Sunday, when I was five or six miles off, he took an opportunity of venting his devilish opinions. One hasted after me, and begged me to return. I did so; but the mischief was done. He had convinced many that we have nothing to do with the law, either before or after our conversion. When I came in, the people looked greatly confused: I perceived there was a great rent in the society, and after preaching and prayer said, "You that are for the old doctrine, which you have heard from the beginning, follow me." Out of the three hundred I lost about fifty; but the Lord soon gave me fifty more. The two Antinomians set up for themselves, until lying, drunkenness, and many other sins destroyed both preachers and people, all but a few that came back to their brethren.

We had no sacrament administered in the army for a long season. I was greatly troubled, and complained aloud in the open camp of the neglect. The chaplains were exceedingly displeased. But the duke of Cumberland, hearing of it, ordered that it should be administered every Lord's day to one regiment or the other.

The duke hearing many complaints of me, inquired who I was; if I did my duty; if I would fight; and if I prayed for a blessing on the king and his arms. They told his royal highness I did all this as well as any man in the regiment. He asked, "Then what have you to say against him?" They said, "Why, he prays and preaches so much, that there is no rest for him." Afterward the duke talked with me himself, and asked me many questions. He seemed so well satisfied with my answers, that

he bade me, "Go on;" and gave out a general order, that I might preach any where, and no man should molest me.

I was preaching one day, when the duke, unknown to me, came to hear me. I that day desired the soldiers never to come there, or to any place of public worship, so as to neglect any duty. I exhorted them to be ready at all calls, and to obey those who had rule over them: and if called out to battle, to stand fast, yea, if needful, fight up to the knees in blood. I said, "You fight for a good cause, and for a good king, and in defence of your country. And this is no way contrary to the tenderest conscience, as many of you found at the battle of Fontenoy, when both you and I did our duty, and yet were all the time filled with love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

I had now for some years endeavoured to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man: and for near three years I had known that God for Christ's sake had forgiven all my sins. I had enjoyed the full assurance of faith, which made me rejoice in all conditions: wet and weary, cold and hungry, I was happy; finding a daily increase in faith and love. I had constant communion with the Father and the Son. It was my delight to do his blessed will, to do good to them that hated me, and to call all sinners to behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. But O! how did the mighty fall, and the weapons of war perish! April 6, 1746, I was off my watch, and fell by a grievous temptation. It came as quick as lightning; I knew not if I was in my senses; but I fell, and the Spirit of God departed from me. It was a great mercy that I did not fall into hell! Blessed be God for that word, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But it was twenty years before I found him to be an advocate for me with the Father again.

My fall was both gradual and instantaneous. I first grew negligent in watching and prayer, and in reading the Scriptures. I then indulged myself more and more, laying out upon my own appetite what I before gave to my poor brethren. I next began to indulge the lust of the eyes, to look at and covet pleasing things, till by little

and little I became shorn of my strength, having left my former love. For many years I had scrupled buying or selling the least thing on the Lord's day. The sixth of April was on a Sabbath. That day I was sent to Antwerp for forage: several of my comrades desired me to buy them some things, which accordingly I did. I had an inward check, but I overruled it, and quickly after became a prey to the enemy. Instantly my condemnation was so great, that I was on the point of destroying myself: God restrained me from this, but Satan was let loose, and followed me by day and by night. The agony of my mind weighed down my body, and threw me into a bloody flux. I was carried to a hospital, just dropping into hell. But the Lord upheld me with an unseen hand, quivering over the great gulf.

Before my fall, my sight was so strong that I could look steadfastly on the sun at noonday. But after it, I could not look a man in the face, nor bear to be in any company. Indeed, I thought myself far more fit for the society of devils than of men: every thing was a burden to me, and grievous to be borne. The roads, the hedges, the trees; every thing seemed cursed of God. Nature seemed void of God, and in the possession of the devil. The fowls of the air and the beasts of the field all appeared in a league against me. I had not one ray of hope, but a fearful looking for of fiery indignation. Very frequently Judas was represented to me as hanging just before me. Had I been cut with knives from head to foot, I could not have been more sore in my flesh than in my spirit. How true is it, the spirit of man may sustain his infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear!

I clearly saw the unshaken faith, the peace, joy, and love, which I had cast away, and felt the return of pride, anger, self-will, and every other devilish temper. And I knew, by melancholy experience, that my last state was worse than the first. I was one day drawn out into the woods, lamenting my forlorn state; and on a sudden I began to weep bitterly. From weeping I fell to howling like a wild beast, so that the woods resounded. Yet could I say, notwithstanding my bitter cry, My stroke is heavier than my groaning. Nevertheless, I could not say, "Lord, have mercy upon me," if I could have purchased heaven thereby.

So great was the displeasure of God against me, that he in a great measure took away the sight of my eyes. I could not see the sun for more than eight months ; even in the clearest summer day it always appeared to me like a mass of blood : at the same time I lost the use of my knees. I cannot describe what I felt. I could truly say, "Thou hast sent fire into my bones." I was often as hot as if I was burning to death : many times I looked to see if my clothes were not on fire. I have gone into a river to cool myself ; but it was all the same. For what could quench the wrath of his indignation, that was let loose upon me ?

At other times, in the midst of summer, I have been so cold, that I knew not how to bear it. All the clothes I could put on had no effect, but my flesh shivered, and my very bones quaked. God grant, reader, that you and I may never feel how hot or cold it is in hell.

I was afraid to pray ; for I thought the die was cast, and my damnation sealed. So I thought it availed not, if all the saints upon earth, and all the angels in heaven, should intercede for me. I was angry at God, angry at myself, and angry at the devil. I thought I was possessed with more devils than Mary Magdalene. I cannot remember that I had one comfortable hope for seven years together. Only while I was preaching to others, my distress was a little abated. But some may inquire, What could move me to preach, while I was in such a forlorn condition ? They must ask of God, for I cannot tell : his ways herein are past my finding out.

In all my trials I have, by the grace of God, invariably kept to one point, preaching *repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ* : testifying that *by grace ye are saved through faith* : that *now is the day of salvation* ; and that this salvation is for all ; that Christ *tasted death for every man*. I always testified that *without holiness no man should see the Lord* ; and that if any, though ever so holy, *draw back*, they will perish everlastingly. I continually expected this would be my lot : yet after some years I again attempted to pray. With this, Satan was not well pleased ; for one day, as I was walking alone, and faintly crying for mercy, suddenly such a hot blast of brimstone flashed in my face as almost took away my

breath. And presently after, as I walked along, an invisible power struck up my heels, and threw me violently upon my face.

When we came back to Holland, I had now and then a spark of hope. One Sunday I went to church, where the Lord's Supper was to be administered. I had a great desire to partake of it. But the enemy came in like a flood to hinder me, pouring in temptations of every kind. I resisted him with my might, till, through the agony of my mind, the blood gushed out of my mouth and nose. However, I was enabled to conquer, and to partake of the blessed elements. So I still waited on God in the way of his judgments, and he led me in a way I had not known.

Whatever my inward distress was, I always endeavoured to appear free among the people. And it pleased God to make me fruitful in the land of my affliction. He gave me favour in their sight; and many children were born unto the Lord. Indeed, I could speak but very little Dutch, with regard to common things; but when we came to talk of the things of God I could speak a great deal. And after I had been at prayer, many have told me they could understand almost every word I said. But what was this to me? I was miserable still, having no comfortable sense of the presence and favour of God.

I had heard of an old experienced Christian at Rotterdam. I went to see him, and found him in an upper room, furnished like that which the Shunamite prepared for Elisha. He looked at me, but did not speak one word. However, I told him a little of my experience. He looked earnestly at me, and soon began to speak, and tell me all his heart. He said he had lived for several years in the favour and love of God, when thinking himself stronger than he was, Satan got an advantage over him. The Spirit departed from him; his strength was gone; and he knew not where to fly for refuge. For ten years sin held him in its iron bondage, and in inexpressible anguish and despair. But one day as he was making his complaint to God, on a sudden a light broke in: sorrow fled away, and his soul was like the chariots of Aminadab. The change was so great that he was utterly lost in wonder, love, and praise. He knew God had "created a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him." And he had now lived

thirty years without one doubt of what God had wrought. This gave me considerable satisfaction : but it lasted only a short time.

When we were going for winter quarters into a town in Holland, I was sent thither before our troop. A gentleman sent for me, and asked "if I knew John Haime." I said, "I am the man." He said, "A gentlewoman in the town wants to speak with you." I went to her house, and she bade me welcome. After a little conversation she asked me, "Do you believe that Christ died for all the world?" Upon my answering, "I do," she replied, "I do not believe one word of it. But, as you know he died for you, and I know he died for me, we will only talk of his love to poor sinners." We were soon as well acquainted as if we had lived together many years, and her house became my home. I asked how many she had in family. She said, seven beside herself. I asked, "What is to become of all these, that you are so easy about them?" She said, "The Lord will call them in his due time, if they belong to him." I asked, "Shall we pray for them?" She said, "Yes : " so I began that evening. In a few days the servant maid was cut to the heart: next, one of her sons was convicted of sin, and soon after converted to God. And before we left the town the whole family were athirst for salvation. When the time of our marching drew near, she was in great trouble. But there was no help : so we took our leave of each other to meet no more till the morning of the resurrection.

At another time I was quartered at Meerkirk, in Holland, at a young woman's, whose father and mother were lately dead. She had many cattle, some of which died daily with the distemper : but she never murmured. I never before met with a woman that was so ready in the Scriptures ; I could not mention any text, but she would readily tell the meaning of it. So that it was no wonder she was thought by others, as well as by herself, to be a prime Christian. I was almost of the same mind at first : but when I had narrowly observed her, I was thoroughly convinced she was deceived, and judged it my duty to undeceive her. I told her, "You are not born of God, you have no living faith." She heard me with much composure of mind ; but she did not believe me. I continued

for three weeks pressing it upon her, at all opportunities. And one evening the Lord made a few words which I spoke sharper than a two-edged sword. Conviction so fastened upon her heart, that she was soon obliged to take her bed. She lay about seven days in deep distress. She had then a comfortable hope ; and this strengthened her body for a few days. But then her convictions returned so heavy that she was obliged to take to her bed again, in great agony of mind. The town's people were alarmed, and ran in crowds to inquire what was the matter : " What could distress her who had enough of this world's wealth, and was so good a woman ? " But they gave her no satisfaction. As soon as they were gone, she immediately called for me, and cried out, " O John ! I shall go to hell : the devil will carry me away." I said, " No ! you shall not go to hell ! The Lord died for poor sinners." She lay in this distress about ten days, and was brought to the gates of death. But the good Samaritan then passed by, poured wine and oil into her wounds, and healed both soul and body ; so that she broke out, " Jehovah is my strength and my song. He is my salvation. Come, all that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul."

I now thought it would be a blessing both to herself and her neighbours, if she would pray with them. She agreed to do so. I commonly prayed first, and she afterward. Sometimes she prayed half an hour together ; and often with such demonstration of the Spirit, as well as such understanding, that the whole house seemed full of the presence of the Lord. At other times she wept like a child, and said, " Lord ! what is this that thou hast done ? Thou hast sent a man from another nation as an instrument of saving me from ruin ! I was rich before, and increased in goods, and knew not that I was blind and naked." Many of her friends and neighbours were concerned for her ; but not so much as she was concerned for them, as well knowing they were seeking death in the error of their life. This she declared to them without reserve ; and the publishing this strange doctrine spread our names far and near ; not only through the town, but through the adjacent country. This brought many from distant towns to see her, who usually returned, blessing

God for the consolation. Some came upward of twenty miles in a morning. After breakfast, I used to pray first; and she went on. Many of our visitants were much affected, and wept bitterly. And the impression did not soon wear off. By this means we became much acquainted with many of the Christians in Holland. They were a free, loving people. So we found them: and so did many of the Methodist soldiers: for they gave them house-room and firing freely. And is not the promise of our Lord sure? "Whosoever shall give unto one of these a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward."

All this time I was still buffeted with sore temptations. I thought that I was worse than Cain; that I had "crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." In rough weather, it was often suggested to me, "This is on your account! See, the earth is cursed for your sake; and it will be no better till you are in hell." I expected soon to be a prey for devils, as I was driven from all the happiness I once enjoyed. Frequently the trouble of my mind made me so weak in body that it was with the greatest difficulty I performed my exercise. The Lord had indeed given me "a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And my life did hang in doubt before me, and I feared day and night, having no assurance of my life." Often did I wish I had never been converted; often, that I had never been born. Sometimes I could not bear the sight of a good man without pain; much less be in his company. Yet I preached every day, and endeavoured to appear open and free to my brethren. I encouraged them that were tempted "not to fear; the Lord would soon appear for himself." Meantime I continued to thunder out the terrors of the law against the ungodly; although some said I was too positive. Too positive! What? In declaring the promises and threatenings of God? Nay, if I cannot be sure of these, I will say to the Bible as the devil did to our Lord, "What have I to do with thee?"

At one time I cannot remember that I had any particular temptation for some weeks. Now I thought God had forsaken me, and the devil had no need to trouble himself about me. He then set the case of Francis Spira

before me, so that I sunk into black despair. Every thing seemed to make against me. I could not open the Bible any where but it condemned me. I was much distressed with dreams and visions of the night. I dreamed one night that I was in hell; another, that I was on Mount Etna; that on a sudden it shook and trembled exceedingly; and that, at last, it split asunder in several places, and sunk into the burning lake, all but that little spot on which I stood. O how thankful was I for my preservation! And this continued for a while, even after I awoke: but then it fled away as a dream.

I was often violently tempted to curse and swear and blaspheme before and after, and even while I was preaching. Sometimes, when I was in the midst of the congregation, I could hardly refrain from laughing aloud, yea, from uttering all kinds of ribaldry and filthy conversation. I thought there was none that loved me now, none that had any concern for my soul, but that God had taken away from every body the affection which they once had. I cried out, "I have sinned! What shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?" I said, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath." Frequently, as I was going to preach, the devil has set upon me as a lion, telling me he would have me just then, so that it has thrown me into a cold sweat. In this agony I have often catched hold of the Bible and read, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." I have said to the enemy, "This is the word of God, and thou canst not deny it." Hereat he would be like a man that shrunk back from the thrust of a sword. But he would be at me again. I again met him in the same way, till at last (blessed be God!) he fled from me. And even in the midst of his sharpest assaults, God gave me just strength enough to bear them. He fulfilled his word, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in thy weakness." When he has strongly suggested, just as I was going to preach, "I will have thee at last," I have answered, (sometimes with too much anger,) "I will have another out of thy hand first." And many, while I was myself in the deep, were truly convinced and converted to God.

When I returned to England, and was discharged from the army, I went to Mr. Wesley, and asked if he would permit me to labour with him as a travelling preacher. He was willing; so I immediately went into a circuit. But this was far from delivering me from that inexpressible burden of soul under which I still laboured. Hence it was that I could neither be satisfied with preaching, nor without; and that wherever I went, I was not able to stay long in one place; but was continually wandering to and fro, seeking rest but finding none. On this account many thought me very unstable, and looked very coldly upon me, as they were wholly unacquainted with the exercises of soul which I laboured under. I thought if David or Peter had been living, they would have pitied me. But many of my friends had not even tasted of that bread and water of affliction which had been my meat and drink for many years. May they walk so humbly and closely with God that they may never taste it!

After I had continued some time as a travelling preacher, Mr. Wesley took me to travel with him. He knew I was fallen from my steadfastness; but he knew likewise how to bear with me. And when I was absent he comforted me by his letters, which were a means, under God, of saving me from utter despair. One of them was as follows:—

“London, June 21, 1748.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which God hath seen good to try you with. Indeed, the chastisement, for the present, is not joyous but grievous; nevertheless it will, by and by, bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It is good for you to be in the fiery furnace; though the flesh be weary to bear it, you shall be purified therein, but not consumed. For there is one with you, whose form is as the Son of God. O look up! Take knowledge of him who spreads underneath you his everlasting arms! Lean upon him with the whole weight of your soul; he is yours; lay hold upon him!

Away let grief and sighing flee,
Jesus hath died for thee, for thee!

"Mercy and peace shall not forsake you. Through every threatening cloud look up ; and wait for happy days."

In this miserable condition I went to Shaftsbury to see my friends, and spent several days. When one and another came and asked me, What news ? I told them, " Good news ; Christ died to save sinners." But it seemed to them as an idle tale ; they " cared for none of these things." One day, being half asleep, I was, as it were, thunderstruck with an inward voice, saying, " What dost thou here ?" I cried to the Lord for mercy, and gave notice that on the Sunday following I would preach in a place at the end of the town, where four ways met. The town and villages round were soon alarmed, and at the time appointed I believe there were three or four thousand people. My inward trouble seemed suspended. I got upon a wall about seven feet high, and began with prayer. I then gave out my text, " Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble : and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch," Mal. iv, 1. Surely, I preached that sermon with the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Twelve, if not fourteen, were then convinced of sin ; some of whom are, I trust, long ago, safely lodged in Abraham's bosom. In a few weeks, fifty persons were joined together in society. I now preached in a large room several times a week. But the people were eager to build a house, and appointed a time of meeting to consider of the means : but on the same day I was taken up and put into prison, two men having sworn flatly against me that I had made a riot. After I had been in prison a night and part of a day, I was taken to a public house. It was soon full of people : I immediately began preaching to them ; and the lions quickly became lambs. A messenger then came in to let me know that I must appear before the mayor and aldermen. I did so. The town clerk told me, " they would not send me to Dorchester jail if I would work a miracle " I told them, " That is done already. Many swearers and drunkards are become sober, God-fearing men." A lawyer

said, "Well, if you will take my advice, you shall not go to prison." I replied, "I suppose you mean if I will give over preaching. But that I dare not do." I was then, without any more ado, hurried away to Dorchester.

My body was now in prison; but that had been a thing of little consequence, had not my soul remained in prison also; in the dungeon of despair. The jailer soon came, and fell into conversation with me; but when I began to preach Jesus, as the only Saviour of sinners, he quickly left me to preach to my fellow-prisoners. Many of these having no righteousness of their own to bring to God, were willing to hear of being saved *by grace*. So I preached to them several times while I was in prison, and they seemed greatly affected. Meantime, God raised up two Quakers at Shaftsbury, who became bound for my appearance at the quarter sessions. I had been in prison but eight days, when one of these came to fetch me out, and brought money to pay the prison fees, and all other expenses. Had I not been put in prison, it is likely some of those prisoners would never have heard the Gospel. I saw, therefore, that God did all things well. Being come back, I began preaching again; and God was present with the people. I soon received a letter from a gentleman at London, bidding me employ two counsellors and an attorney, and draw upon him for whatever money I wanted. I carried this letter to the postmaster, and asked if he was willing to let me have money upon it. He said, "Yes; as much as you please." This was soon noised about the town: so the magistrates were glad to make up the matter. And the work of God so increased that in a little time we had eighty in society.

During my great distress of mind I went twice into Ireland, as a travelling preacher; and in each passage over the sea I was very near being cast away. October 27, 1751, I preached at Mountmelick. The next morning, after I had travelled about two miles, suddenly my senses failed me. I was soon insensible where I was, and where I came from. I supported myself a considerable time by a gate in the road; as I did not know which way to go, nor what place to ask for. At length my understanding returned, and I began to weep. But what I passed through I cannot express, so unspeakable was my

anguish. But the tender mercy of God supported me therein, that my spirit might not fail before him.

In the beginning of September, 1766, I was living at Shaftsbury, when Mr. Wesley passing through in his way to Cornwall, I asked if it would be agreeable for me to be at his house in London a few days. He said, "Yes; as long as you please;" but before I set out I received the following letter:—

"St. Ives, Cornwall, Sept. 16, 1766.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I think you have no need to go to London. God has, it seems, provided a place for you here. Mr. Hoskins wants a worn-out preacher to live with him, to take care of his family, and to pray with them morning and evening."

I went down. As soon as Mr. Hoskins saw me, he said, "You are welcome to stay here as long as you live." But no sooner did I fix there, than I was, if possible, ten times worse than before. In vain I strove to make myself easy; the more I strove, the more miserable I was: not that I wanted any thing which this world can afford. But can this world satisfy a soul that was made for God? The distress of mind soon became intolerable: it was a burden too heavy for me to bear. It seemed to me that unless I got some relief, I must die in despair. One day I retired into the hall, fell on my face, and cried for mercy; but got no answer. I got up, and walked up and down the room, wringing my hands, and crying like to break my heart; begging of God for Christ's sake, if there was any mercy for me, to help me. And blessed be his name, all on a sudden, I found such a change through my soul and body as is past description. I was afraid I should alarm the whole house with the expressions of my joy. I had a full witness from the Spirit of God that I should not find that bondage any more. Nor have I ever found it to this day. Glory be to God for all his mercy!

But notwithstanding this wonderful change, I had not the faith which I had once. But I found a very great alteration in reading the Scriptures. The promises to me opened more and more; and I expected to find some great thing wrought upon me all at once. But God's

ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. He led me by a way I had not known. He greatly deepened his work in my soul, and drove out his enemies by little and little, till I could clearly say, "Thy will be done." The lion became a lamb, and I found the truth of that word by happy experience, "thou wilt keep his soul in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee!"

I now thought I would stay with Mr. Hoskins; for he was very kind to me. But I soon began to be so bound in spirit, that I could hardly pray in the family: nay, I could not ask a blessing on our food, without much hesitation and stammering. And all the comforts of life, which were then in great plenty, became altogether comfortless. Mr. Story being then in the round, I made my complaint to him. He told me he would take my place for a month, if I would spend that time in the circuit. This I gladly undertook; and although for the space of three weeks my coat was not once dry upon my back, yet I was warmer within, and far more comfortable, than in a warm parlour.

When Mr. Story was gone, I thought I would stay here a few days, and then travel. But the first night I was as restless as ever: so in the morning I took my leave, and in January, 1767, went into the east of Cornwall. I found it was good for me to be there; my faith increased daily. And, blessed be God, I found love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, springing up in my soul. I trust God will continue them till my dying day, and then receive me to himself.

I had long been travelling in the wilderness, in "a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death." This had been my lot for twenty years, a just judgment of the Almighty for my sin. Blessed be his name, that he did not wholly cast me off! But I saw clearly that nothing would avail, but a fresh application of the Saviour's blood to my wounded soul. I had now a happy sense of this; which, with the thoughts of his forbearing with me twenty years before my conversion; his filling me with his love for three years; his dealings with me in my fallen condition, and my present deliverance; caused my soul to overflow with won-

der and praise for his long-suffering goodness. I saw nothing was too hard for God ! I could cast myself on the Lord Jesus ! All the promises in the Scripture were full of comfort ; particularly that, " I have known thee in the furnace of affliction." The Scriptures were all precious to my soul, as the rain to the thirsty land. And when Satan assaulted me afresh, I did not stand to reason with him, but fled to the Lord Jesus for refuge. Hereby the snare was soon broken, and I found an increase of faith, hope, and love. I could now truly say, " The Lord is my shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul ; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

It was not my intention ever to write any account of these things, had not some of my friends greatly pressed me thereto. Nevertheless I put it off from time to time, being conscious I had no talent for writing, until my peace was well-nigh lost : at last I was prevailed upon to begin. I had not written many lines before I found my soul in perfect peace. I found myself likewise greatly assisted to recollect the manifold dealings of God with me : so that I have the greatest reason to believe it is his will I should make known, even by these instances of his goodness, that he is " long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." May he bless the feeble attempt to the good of many ! May they learn wisdom by the things that I have suffered ! And be all the glory ascribed unto Him that " sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever !"

MR. JOHN MURLIN.

SOME months ago a sketch of my life was published in the *Arminian Magazine*. But as the nature of that work would not admit of a circumstantial account, I was obliged to omit many particulars which may be useful to serious readers. This consideration, together with the importunity of my friends, has induced me to enlarge the subject.

I was born in the parish of St. Stephen, Brenwell, in the county of Cornwall, about the beginning of August, 1722. I was the second son of Richard and Eliza Murlin. I was sent to school when very young, where I was taught to read, and to say my catechism, &c. And, as my father feared God, he instructed his children in the principles of religion, and caused us to attend the church on the Sabbath day.

As I was their youngest child, they indulged me too much. The consequence was, self will and passion discovered themselves in me very soon. Sometimes I disobeyed my parents; and frequently quarrelled with my eldest brother. I also swore and told lies, though not so frequently as many children did. But, notwithstanding this, even at this early period, I frequently had serious thoughts of God and eternity; but they soon wore off for want of more spiritual instruction.

As my father was a farmer, I was employed in that business till I was near thirteen years of age. About this time he died; and I have reason to believe he died in peace.

I was now desirous of learning the business of a carpenter, and accordingly, at Michaelmas, 1735, I was bound to one for seven years. My master lived utterly without God in the world; he was much given to swearing, and taking God's name in vain; and I too readily followed his example. He had a little estate of his own, on which I was employed a great part of my time; and, as he did not well understand his business himself, I made but little progress therein.

At Michaelmas, 1742, my apprenticeship ended. I then went to work with another master, where I continued several years, and made considerable progress both in my business and learning: applying myself in the day time to my trade, and in the evening to writing and accounts.

But all this time I was an enemy both to God and my own soul. Indeed at times I had convictions of sin and some concern about my future state; but being surrounded by those who had no thought of God, and having no one to direct me, I quickly stifled my convictions and became worse than before. To cursing and swearing, I soon added gaming and drunkenness. Lord!

how great is thy mercy in sparing those who live in such rebellion against thee !

At this time my mother, who lived about seven miles off, heard the Methodists, who were instrumental in the hand of God in bringing her to the knowledge of the truth. After she had "tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," she wrestled with the Lord on my account, who in a short time heard and answered her in the joy of her heart.

When I left my place I returned home, and began business for myself. I was then delivered from my old companions, and by that means freed from many snares and temptations, which before I was exposed to.

February, 1749, I heard the Methodists. The word was attended with "the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power." By this means I was soon brought under a deep conviction. The remembrance of my sins was now grievous to me ; and the burden of them was intolerable. My relations were sometimes afraid I should lose my reason. I fasted and prayed much, and often thought that a burnt crust was too good for such a wretch as me. "The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me, and his hand pressed me sore." I frequently kneeled at my bed side, and wrestled with God in prayer till near midnight : and sometimes I was afraid to lie down in bed lest I should awake in hell. At other times I fell on the ground, and roared for the very disquietness of my heart. Sometimes I was sorely tempted that the day of grace was past ; and that though I sought, I should never find mercy at the hand of God. I remember one afternoon, Satan was permitted to inject blasphemous thoughts into my mind to such a degree, that they greatly affected both my body and mind. I felt something of that distress which David mentions in the 116th psalm : "The sorrows of death compassed me ; and the pains of hell gat hold upon me : I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord ; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul !" At other times, when I heard the preacher speak of the love of Christ, and of his willingness to save poor lost sinners, it fixed my convictions the deeper to think I should be such a rebel against so loving a Saviour ! But, blessed be God ! though my

convictions were very deep, they did not continue long.

In April, I heard Mr. Downs preach on part of the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke. He told us how willing the Lord was to receive returning prodigals: under this sermon I found great deliverance. My burden was taken away. And from that day I never found that distress I had felt before. But as yet I was not fully satisfied that my sins were forgiven.

After this I had a calm serenity in my soul, and often much peace and joy. But I wanted a clearer manifestation of the pardoning love of God. And this he was pleased to give me soon after, under the preaching of Mr. Richard Trathan. I could then indeed say, "O Lord, I will praise thee! Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." And although, since then, I have met with sore trials, and sometimes have been brought very low, yet I have never lost my confidence of the favour of God, and trust I never shall.

Some time after this, Mr. William Roberts (then the travelling preacher on our circuit) told me, "You must take care of the little class." I was struck with fear, and went out of the room, telling him, "I cannot undertake it." But he insisted on it; and as the people desired I should, I at last complied, though with great reluctance; for I thought there were some in the class whose abilities were far superior to mine.

I then bought a large Bible, with some other books, and applied myself to prayer, and to reading the Holy Scriptures. And it pleased God to open my understanding more and more, to see the wondrous things contained in his word.

About this time I was often beset by some disputatious Anabaptists, who endeavoured to prove unconditional election. I generally stopped them short by asking, "Do you believe absolute reprobation? Do you think that the merciful God did, from all eternity, appoint the greatest part of the human race to eternal damnation, without any possibility of being saved? If you believe

that he appointed the end, do you not believe that he also appointed the means to bring them to it: and if so, do you not make him the author of all the sin that ever was committed?" On their confessing that they did believe this, I told them I could not be of their minds for several reasons.

First, Because it would be unjust to appoint them to sin, and then to punish them with everlasting fire for fulfilling that appointment.

Secondly, Because it would impeach God's veracity, who has positively asserted "that he will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth:" more especially seeing he condescends to confirm this truth with an oath, swearing, "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

Thirdly, Because, if God intended that the greatest part of the human race should unavoidably suffer eternal torments, he would not have given his only begotten Son to die for them; according to these declarations: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Fourthly, Because, if he had intended to send the greatest part of his helpless creatures to hell, without a possibility of being saved, he would not have sent his Spirit to "convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come:" much less would the "grace of God that bringeth salvation have appeared to all men; teaching them that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." When they found that they could not prevail, they went away and gave me no farther trouble.

After this I met my class constantly, to whom I sometimes gave a word of exhortation, and never found myself more happy than when among the children of God.

There were at this time in the neighbourhood several local preachers: but they had more places to preach at on a Sabbath day than they could possibly supply.—One of them (Thomas Randall) came to me and said, “The people are starving for want of bread: and can you withhold it from them? The Lord has put it into your hand: but you are not a good steward: otherwise you would dispense to all their portion of meat in due season.” His words made a deep impression on my mind: for, before this, I had a conviction that it was my duty to call sinners to repentance. And though I put him off for the present, yet I could not shake off a continual fear, lest I was burying my talent in the earth; and should be condemned at last as an unprofitable servant.

Some time after, preaching had been appointed at a neighbouring place; and no preacher was at liberty to go. Word was sent to me that if I did not go the people would be disappointed. I was then in a strait, and knew not what to do. I prayed for direction, and then came to this resolution: “I will go this once and see whether I am enabled to speak to the people or not; so shall I be better satisfied either to speak again, or to be silent.” Accordingly, I took my horse, and set out with a trembling heart. When I came to the place there were more people than the house would contain: this obliged me to preach in the open air: when I stood up it was with much fear and trembling. However, I gave out a hymn, and went to prayer, wherein I found unexpected liberty. I then read, Acts iii, 19, “Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” The Lord set both my heart and tongue at liberty to declare his word. The people heard not only with great attention, but showers of tears ran down many cheeks. The good impressions then made were not only deep, but lasting: for when I was in Cornwall, in July, 1777, some well remembered what they had heard between twenty and thirty years before.

After this I laboured constantly as a local preacher; and though my abilities were not large, yet God gave me favour in the eyes of the people: and it pleased him to make the plain words I spoke a blessing to many souls.

At this time the world began to smile on me. Living with my mother, my board cost me nothing: I got money fast at my business; and had a rich uncle who appeared to have a great regard for me: I had a good horse to ride wherever I pleased, and was happy in the midst of my Christian friends. I also built me a house in the parish of St. Mewan, in order to fix my tabernacle there.

Just then I received a letter from Mr. Wesley, inquiring if I was willing to be a travelling preacher; and if I was, desiring me to go into the west of Cornwall. I wrote back my objections: 1. That my aged mother desired I would not leave her: 2. That not only my relations, but my Christian friends were unwilling to part with me: and, 3. That though I might be of some use among my neighbours, yet my abilities were not equal to so great a work. Mr. Wesley fully answered all my objections. I saw the things of this world were not worthy to be compared with the things of God: and though my mother desired my company, she was not dependent on me; neither could I find any material reason why I should not travel. So, after a short struggle in my mind, I resolved to give up all for Christ: and, accordingly, October 12, 1754, I took my horse, and without delay went into the west of Cornwall. Here I laboured till August, 1755, with much satisfaction; and, I hope, the word was a blessing to many.

When the preachers who were appointed to Cornwall the ensuing year came, I left the county, and laboured about six weeks in Devonshire. From thence I rode to Bristol, where I spent a few weeks very agreeably. Then I set off for London, where (through mercy) I safely arrived on the 30th of October, 1755. Here I received much benefit from the serious, loving conversation of our Christian friends: I also found a great blessing in dispensing the word. But my stay here was very short; for, in about a fortnight, I set off for Norwich: when I came within sight of the city, I wept over it, and lifted up my heart to God in prayer, that he might bless my labours in that place. I believe the Lord heard and answered my prayer; for though we were much persecuted, he was pleased to bless the word of his grace to many souls.

I left Norwich on the 8th of February, 1756, and came to London on the 13th. Here I again found a refuge from the storm. After spending three months very comfortably in and near London, I set off for Canterbury, where I met with a few friends who were Israelites indeed, in whose conversation I found great satisfaction. O what a blessing it is to be with those who are truly devoted to God! I spent about six weeks here, and at Dover, Sandwich, and a few other places, with great pleasure and profit to my own soul; and I hope many others were profited by my labours. The 10th of July I returned to London again, where I stayed about three weeks; and on the 2d of August set off for Portsmouth, where I arrived safe on the 3d. After spending six days here, I crossed over to the Isle of Wight, where I found a few disciples at Newport, who had made choice of God for their portion: especially three in one house; one of whom had been confined to her bed for some years, but happy in God, and waiting for her dissolution. O how much better it is to dwell in the cottage of Fanny Bevas, with Christ, than to dwell in the palace of an Alexander or a Nero, without him! After spending two nights in the island, I returned to Portsmouth; and on the 13th took horse early in the morning, and came to London the same evening.

After spending a few days here, Mr. Olivers and I set off together for the Bristol conference, where we arrived safe on the 21st. At this conference we were appointed to labour in Ireland; but were obliged to wait till the 15th of September for a ship; then we, and three other preachers, embarked with Captain Davis, and, after a rough passage of four days, landed safely at Robinson's Cove. This year I had trials and consolations, and I hope some small success in my feeble labours.

The 19th of July, 1757, I embarked at Dublin, and landed at Parkgate on the 20th. After spending a few days at Chester, I set off for the conference at London. From thence I set off for Whitehaven, where I arrived safe on the 31st of August: here the Lord blessed me greatly, both in my labours and in my own soul; many sinners were convinced and converted, and the society was much increased. Here I met with Benjamin Bigg,

who travelled with me three or four years. He was a favourite servant of the old Sir James Lowther, and was the only person in the room when his master died. Sir William, the next heir to Sir James, left my friend fifty pounds a year for life, which he spent in doing good.

The 20th of April, 1758, I embarked, with my companion, for Liverpool; but the captain of the vessel deceived his passengers, and carried us all to the Isle of Man, where we stayed a week. The second evening I preached in a large barn; but on Sunday it would not contain the congregation, so I was obliged to preach abroad. The people, in general, behaved well, and gave great attention. After I left the island, some of them sent to Whitehaven, desiring to have another preacher. But it was some years before another was sent; there being so little probability of doing any considerable good while the whole island was a nest of smugglers. The duke of Athol was then king of the island; but the case is now altered: for since it has been purchased of the duke, and united to the crown of England, that detestable trade is rooted out: a considerable part of the island is cultivated; at one part of it a herring fishery is established; at another, a large linen manufactory. And now we see the fruit of our labours there in the conversion of many sinners to God.

After we had been in the island above a week, we embarked again for Liverpool; and thence we hastened on, and got to Bristol the 9th of August, in time for the conference.

When the conference ended, I laboured in the Wiltshire circuit, with great satisfaction, till January, 1759. I then received a letter from Mr. Wesley, who desired me to hasten to Norwich, with all speed: for he had taken the charge of the late Mr. Wheatley's tabernacle and people: and a charge it was indeed! for many of Wheatley's dear lambs were little better than wolves. Some who were sincere among them joined with our society; some of them joined with William Cudworth, the Antinomian, and some met with one Elcey Good. I then clearly saw the dreadful consequences which attend the doctrine of such preachers: their hearers were not converted to God, and their lives were a scandal to

the Gospel of Christ. What from outward persecutions, and the irregular lives of professors, I met with many trials the three months I stayed there; yet the Lord was my support; and before I left them things appeared to wear a brighter aspect. Many of the tri- fliers had left us, and others had joined in their stead: and in general we had a serious congregation.

I stayed at Norwich from the 30th of January till the beginning of May, and on the 4th I went to Col- chester, where I stayed a few months, and came back to London on the 5th of November. This was like putting into harbour after a severe storm. But, alas! here we have no continuing city. O that we may seek one to come, whose builder and maker is God!

December 11th I left London again, and came to Canterbury on the 12th, and laboured near three months in the Kent circuit, with much satisfaction. Just as I was going to leave that city, a widow gen- tlewoman of considerable fortune made her case known to Mr. Lepine, and told him she would be very glad if I would call and take a breakfast with her. Mr. Lepine brought the message, and accord- ingly I called on her, and we had some conversation together on a subject of a very serious nature: and though I intended to alter my state, if I could meet with a suitable companion, yet, on mature deliberation, I found she was not the person with whom I could be happy. My chief reason was, a fear that she was not devoted to God.

On the 28th of February, 1760, I returned to London again. I found it once more a place of rest: for here I had only to preach night and morning, without taking charge of the society. Here were also many helps to bring us forward in our spiritual journey. Here I could live and die: but the Lord's will be done.

I left London in April, and on the 26th I arrived at Bedford. While I stayed here I had a severe fever, which I hope was a profitable school: I could say it was good for me that I was afflicted. The apothecary poured in his drugs; but I was almost burned up with thirst, and wanted a good draught of water, which I could not ob- tain, till one night, after most of the family were in bed, I

prevailed with the servant girl to set a bottle by my bedside. I took a hearty draught and fell into a sweat, and by the next evening (through mercy) I was able to preach.

On the 28th of May I returned to London again, and through a kind Providence got acquainted with Mrs. Elizabeth Berrisford, whom I visited several times while I stayed in town. And I hope our visits were profitable: we seldom parted without prayer.

In August Mr. Jones, Mr. Hampson, and I set off for Bristol. Having been absent from my friends above five years, I had a desire to pay them a visit: so after the conference I went with Mr. Wesley to Cornwall. After I had spent a little time at home, I continued to labour in the east of Cornwall, with much satisfaction, till Feb., 1761.

I then received a letter from Mr. Wesley, desiring me to hasten away to my old station at Norwich. So I had a journey to take between three and four hundred miles in the dead of winter. However, I set off and reached Norwich the 14th of March. Here I continued till August, and laboured with more satisfaction, and more success, than I had the year before.

After our conference I went into Sussex, where I met with a young clergyman whom God had called out of darkness into his marvellous light. But, as there is no communion between light and darkness, his rector soon differed with him. He then joined the Methodists, and since that time has laboured as a faithful servant in his Master's vineyard.

November the 9th I came back to London, and continued in town four months. On the 11th of February, 1762, (after near two years' acquaintance,) I was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Berrisford. She has proved a faithful companion, and travelled with me through a great part of this kingdom, and has rather been a spur than a hinderance to me in the work of the ministry. Lord, reward her a thousandfold in her own bosom!

On the 10th of April we set off in the stage for Bedford. When we came within a few miles of the place, one of the horses dropped down and died in a few minutes. How uncertain is life, either in man or beast! While we were in those parts I visited Towcester, Whit-

tlebury, and some other places, and found a blessing among those simple, honest-hearted people.

We returned to London again on the 3d of May, where we stayed about six weeks, and then set off once more for Norwich, where we arrived safe on the 19th of June. Here I generally preached twice, sometimes thrice a day; beside meeting the society, visiting the sick, &c. But, Lord, what hast thou done to save sinners! What hast thou done to save *me*!

We stayed at Norwich above four months, and returned to London on the 3d of November. The 19th we set off again to visit our friends in Oxford and Buckinghamshire, and the Lord was very gracious to me in this journey. On Tuesday, December the 7th, as I was going from High-Wicombe to Epstone, I called at a farm house to inquire the road; the mistress who directed me went in and told the family there was a Methodist preacher gone to Mrs. Clark's. The master of the house, with his son and daughter, the man and maid servant, in a short time set off to hear the preacher. On the road the master said, "If the man does not speak good sense, I will confound him before the people." When they came into the house they could not sit together for laughing. I preached on Rom. viii, 9, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." The Lord was pleased to send the word with power to all their hearts. Their laughing was turned into mourning, and their joy into heaviness: so they returned home with broken and contrite hearts. Some time after, when the master was on his deathbed, he sent for a preacher to pray with him, and I hope he is now in paradise. Afterward Mrs. Clark had preaching at her house, and I believe it continues there to this day. Lord, let them all be found at thy right hand in the great day of accounts!

On December 15th we returned to London again, where we continued till the 5th of March, 1763. We then set off for Canterbury. I was much blessed in my own soul the two months I stayed in this circuit: and I hope the Lord made his word a blessing to many. On the 1st of April, being Good Friday, I preached on John xix, 5, "Behold the man!" My heart was melted down with love to my Redeemer, who had suffered death upon the

cross for our redemption: I was exceedingly happy in my own soul, and I believe many found a remarkable blessing that evening. The next night, being Easter-eve, I dreamed I saw Christ on the cross, and the wound of the spear in his breast: to which wound I saw one fly for consolation. I then thought he came down from the cross and stood on the ground, with his servant Moses on his left hand. I then began to examine myself whether I was sincere or not, and thought I could appeal to him that it was my desire to do his will. Yet I was conscious that if he was to mark iniquity he could find cause enough to condemn me. I then thought I went toward him weeping, and confessing my sins. As I went forward, begging for mercy, I thought his merciful eye overlooked them all.

The 4th of May we returned to London, where we stayed two months, and then set off for Norwich again, and arrived safe the 2d of July. Here I continued in my old station till the 31st of October, and the Lord blessed my labours with a measure of success. On the 2d of November we came to London once more, where we continued till the 7th of February, 1764. Then we set off again, and on Friday, the 10th, came to Salisbury. The Lord was very gracious to me in this journey. On Sunday, the 12th, I preached in the evening from Hosea ii, 16, "Thou shalt call me Ishi!" The Lord blessed the word to many: one young man, in particular, was then justified, and ever since has been an ornament to his profession.

On Wednesday, the 15th, we arrived safe at Bristol, where I laboured with much satisfaction above five months. Here the people are established in religion, and many of them much devoted to God. Our conference this year was in this city, in the beginning of August: after which, Mr. Wesley had proposed to visit the societies in Devonshire and Cornwall: but, having a sudden call to London, he desired me to supply his place. This I did willingly; and the more so, as my wife had never seen my relations. Accordingly, I set off on Monday, the 13th, and preached at Limsom that night. Tuesday, the 14th, I preached at Taunton, and on Wednesday, the 15th, at Collumpton. Here I met my old friend, Mr.

William Roberts: what a pity that a man of such eminent abilities should be confined to so narrow a sphere! On Thursday, the 16th, I preached at Exeter. On Friday, the 17th, we met several of our friends on the road, who came from Plymouth Dock, expecting to meet Mr. Wesley. They returned with us; and as soon as I came to Dock, I went immediately to the preaching house, which was quite full of people; and, though they were disappointed in the instrument, our Lord did not disappoint us; for he crowned our assembly with his presence. I preached again on Saturday 18th, and twice the next day. Here I met with John Trembath, once an eminent preacher, and an instrument for good to thousands; but now miserable in his own mind, and, I fear, a slave to sin! O, how are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished! Shall he, after preaching to others, become a castaway himself? Rather let him once more awake, and strive to save his own soul with those who have heard him!

After morning preaching on Monday, the 20th, we set off, crossed Saltash Passage, and went on to John Bunt's, near Leskard, where we lodged that night. Tuesday, the 21st, we arrived safe at St. Austle, where we were met by my mother and uncle, who were glad to see me, and their new relation. After preaching we went home with my mother, where I left my wife the next day, and set off to supply those places where Mr. Wesley was expected. The congregations were very large in most places. I rejoiced to see many of my old acquaintances still travelling in the road to Zion, and found sweet communion with God in this journey.

Wednesday, September 12th, I returned home, and after visiting a few societies in the neighbourhood, we took our leave of our friends. O that we may all meet on the mount of God, where pain and parting shall be no more! Monday, the 17th, we set off for Port Isaac, and after visiting the societies on the western coast, we came to Bristol on Thursday, the 27th, where we stayed a few days: and on Monday, October 1st, we set off again, and arrived safe in London on Thursday, the 11th. We spent about three months in town: but this is not our resting place! Lord, bring us safe at last where the weary are at rest. On Tuesday, January 15th, 1765, we set off for

Leeds, visiting the societies as we went along. On Thursday, 24th, we came to Sheffield, where Mr. Wesley desired me to stay a few weeks, in order to still the mob, if it was possible. I hope my stay here was of use, as the persecution was much abated before I went away.

March 8th, we came to Leeds. I laboured in this circuit with much satisfaction for five months. It being a remarkably dry summer, the pastures were almost burnt up, and the cattle ready to perish for want. I appointed Friday, August 2d, for a day of fasting and prayer, by the societies of that circuit. We met at five o'clock in the morning, again at eight, at one, and seven in the evening. When we came out from prayer at eight o'clock in the morning, our gracious Father sent a few gentle drops on the earth. At one o'clock we met again, and I expounded Deut. xi, 13, and the following verses. When we came out we had a gentle shower. After the evening service, the heavens grew black with clouds, and when we got up the next morning, the earth was greatly refreshed with rain, which continued to fall upon it. This proved a blessing to many souls, when they saw such a remarkable answer to prayer. Elijah sent his servant seven times before the rain came; but the Lord was pleased to answer us on the second time. Whenever I think of that day, my heart melts with gratitude to God for his great condescension in answering the prayers of his feeble and unworthy children.

Monday, the 19th, we set off for Manchester conference. When it ended we returned to Birstal; and laboured very agreeably that year with Mr. Pawson and Greenwood, and the more so, as the Lord blessed our labours.

This year there was a greater fall of snow in Yorkshire than had been known in the memory of man. It began on Tuesday, February the 11th, and continued till Friday, the 14th. I was confined at Huddersfield all this time: when it ceased, I attempted to return to Birstal; but when I came about half way, going up Murfield-Moor, I could not find the causeway. The snow was so deep that it reached above my knees. The horse could not walk; but was forced to plunge, and was ready to fall upon me. I then thought I should be buried in the snow. Being quite spent, and seeing a few cottages at a distance, I called for help. A man opened his door, and

looked on me awhile, then turned in again, and shut his door after him, and left me in that situation. Not being able to go on, I continued to call for help; at last two young men came out of another cottage, who knew where the causeway lay. One of them led my horse, and I followed after. I was glad to give them a shilling to take me up to the top of the moor. I had two or three guides after that, and at last, through a kind providence, I got to Gumersal, within one mile of Birstal: but the narrow lanes being filled with snow, I could go no farther. At last I got to Mr. Rhodes' house, who took care both of man and beast. When I got up the next morning I saw the neighbours carrying home a dead person. He was a strong man, and had not walked much above half a mile; and was but little above a stone's cast from his own house. Good Lord, hitherto thou hast preserved me, for which I desire to return thee my unfeigned thanks!

Tuesday, August the 12th, we came to the conference at Leeds, and from thence to London, where we arrived safe on Friday the 29th. On Sunday, the 31st, I preached in Moorfields to a very large congregation, and the Lord was present with us indeed. The latter end of this year I spent in and near London.

Friday, April 3d, 1767, by the desire of the countess of Huntingdon, I set off for Brighthelmstone, where I continued three weeks. While I was here, I received a letter which gave me an account of my mother's death, who died calling upon the Lord. She had known the Lord about nineteen or twenty years, and had adorned the Gospel from the time of her conversion. As she had always been a very kind mother, but more especially so ever since she had known the grace of God, I was concerned for the loss of such a parent; but, on the other hand, when I considered that she was gone to her reward, I found great joy and thankfulness. May her children continue to tread in her steps, that we may rejoice together before the throne of God to all eternity!

On Wednesday, the 29th, we returned to London; my stay was short here; for, in about a fortnight, we paid our friends a visit at Colchester, where we continued about six weeks, and then returned to London again.

On Friday, the 24th, I set off in a stage coach for Cornwall, to settle some temporal affairs, which I completed, and returned again to the conference.

From hence I went into the Bristol circuit, where we had a remarkable increase of the work of God; especially at Kingswood. I added above a hundred and sixty members to that single society; most of whom found peace with God. When God teacheth, there is no delay in learning. It was astonishing to hear the poor colliers in prayer! They prayed with such simplicity and fervour as was enough to melt a heart of stone. Children also were frequently heard crying to the Lord to convert their parents, that they might not go down with gray hairs and sorrow to the grave! and thirteen or fourteen children at the school were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. But which of these will endure to the end?

Tuesday, August 16th, 1768, our conference began in Bristol. When it was over we set off for London, in company with our friends Mr. and Mrs. Green, who stopped in town with us above a week. This year I laboured in and about London, with much satisfaction to my own mind, and I hope with some degree of usefulness to others.

Friday, February 10th. 1769, after preaching at our chapel in West-street, Miss Lee (of Wolverhampton) told me that near five years ago she heard me preach at Bristol, when the Lord was pleased to send the word with power to her heart. From that time she never rested till she had found peace with God. She said she was then spoiled for good company, as the world calls it. Her mother and friends at first thought she was going mad; but after awhile her mother became nearly as mad as herself; for she also began to cry for mercy, and to attend the preaching of the word at every opportunity. May they both endure to the end, that they may be saved!

Wednesday, April 19th, Mr. Charles Greenwood invited me to a feast, provided for the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. After dinner, I sung a hymn, gave an exhortation, and went to prayer. The poor seemed much affected, and were thankful for food and advice, as well as for the money Mr. Greenwood gave them. O

that all who have it in their power would follow his example ! that when the Redeemer shall appear on his great white throne, he may say unto them also, I was hungry and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink ; I was naked and ye clothed me :—therefore, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Monday 27th, after preaching at five o'clock in the morning at Brentford, one of our friends took me in his boat up the river as far as Richmond. As I saw the fishermen draw their net to shore, who after toiling all night, had caught nothing, I cried out, Blessed Jesus, give me more success as a fisher of men ! Do thou always stand on the shore, and direct me to cast the net on the right side, that I may enclose a multitude for thyself !

The houses and gardens on each side of the river appeared pleasantly situated, and at the top of Richmond hill we had a very fine prospect. But I observed here and there a hatchment hung out, as a token of mortality ! O cruel death ! cannot the rich, the mighty, the honourable inhabitants of these stately mansions forbid thy entrance, or escape thy dart ? May I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens !

Wednesday, June 7th, I read some of Dr. Lucas' sermons on death, judgment, and a future state ; and found it profitable to consider myself standing at the bar of God, surrounded with dissolving nature ! the world flaming ! the trumpets sounding ! armies of angels attending ! rocks and mountains falling ! lightnings flashing ! thunders rolling ! devils howling ! and the Judge sitting on his great white throne ! Lord ! create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me, that I may be fully prepared for that great day !

Tuesday, 20th, I preached at the Foundry to a large congregation, many of whom appeared to be deeply affected : the Lord also blessed my own soul. I preached again at five o'clock the next morning ; after which I was much afflicted with a pain in my breast, and spitting of blood. I believe the cause was preaching constantly twice a day, beside meeting the societies and visiting the

sick. In such cases I am often at a loss to know the will of God. I would not spare myself, neither would I imprudently throw my life away. But if I must err, let it be on the safe side ! Whatever I suffer, the few days I remain on earth, let me not be numbered among the slothful servants !

Saturday, July 22d, 1769, we set off for the north, and lodged at Hertford that night. The next day I heard a sermon at church ; but I heard not one word either of God, or Christ, or death, or judgment, or heaven, or hell. If this is the gospel that people hear, what wonder that so many of them are without Christ, and without hope, and without God in the world !

After visiting the societies on the road, we came to Leeds on Saturday, the 29th. Our conference began here Tuesday, August the 1st. The Lord was with us of a truth, and gave us a remarkable blessing at parting.

Tuesday, the 8th, we set off for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, through a kind providence, we arrived safe on Thursday, the 10th. After spending a week in town, I set off for the country circuit.

Saturday, the 19th, as I was going to the preaching house in Sunderland, I saw a poor drunkard so much intoxicated that he could not walk alone ; he had literally been wallowing like a sow in the mire. He attempted to swear, but could not speak plain : two of his companions led him to his own door, and as he was attempting to go down a pair of stone stairs (for he lived in a cellar) he fell, and fractured his skull : he lay six hours after, but never spoke another word ; and in this condition went to appear before a holy God !

Monday, July the 2d, we took leave of our friends at Newcastle, and visited the societies from thence to London, where we arrived safe on Monday, the 30th.

Tuesday, August 7th, 1770, our conference began, and continued till Friday, the 10th, with much harmony and love. This year I laboured in and about London with much satisfaction to myself, and I hope with some degree of usefulness to others.

Wednesday, July 24th, 1771, we left London. I preached at Brentford that evening, and after visiting the societies on the road we arrived safe at Bristol, where

our conference began, Tuesday, August the 6th. This year Mr. Pawson and I laboured very comfortably together in the Bristol circuit, and I hope with some success.

Friday, July 3d, 1772, we left Bristol, and came safe to the Leeds conference. From hence we set off for Manchester. This year I met with some heavy trials not only from the world, but also from my fellow labourer, whom I was obliged to exclude for improper behaviour. At a village called Oldham, about seven miles from Manchester, (a place famous through all that country for daring and desperate wickedness,) we had heavy persecution for a season. As I was going to preach in the street one Sabbath day, two constables, with a great mob at their heels, took me into custody, for riotous behaviour, in singing about two verses of a hymn, as the people were coming out of church. They took me to a public house, and kept me all night. The constables and their assistants were soon special drunk, and began to quarrel with each other. From words they soon went to blows. The house where we were belonged to the clerk of the parish, whose son, thinking me ill used, took my part. One of the constables took him by the collar, on which he wrested the staff out of the drunken constable's hand, and broke his head with it.

The next day I was taken before a justice, and bound over to the quarter sessions. But I traversed, and had it tried at the assizes; from thence the cause was sent back to the quarter sessions, where it was given against me. While the jury were determining to find me guilty, one of them, a plain simple countryman, took an opportunity to slip out of court, because (as he said afterward) he could not in conscience say that singing a hymn with a peaceable multitude was breeding a riot.

From the beginning to the end of this affair my soul was kept in peace: and as to my persecutors, I only wished that they might be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.

After I had left those parts I was glad to hear that the word of God had taken effect among the sinners of Oldham: that many of them were turned from the evil of

their ways ; that they had found peace with God ; and that in a short time they built themselves a chapel, where they now peaceably assemble to worship God in spirit and truth. I also hear that there is a great reformation in other places in that neighbourhood. O Lord ! thus let thy kingdom come with power, and prevail against the kingdom of darkness in every place.

Monday, July 19th, 1773, we left Manchester. I preached that evening at Macclesfield. The house was quite crowded with attentive hearers ; I believe most of them were much affected, as they were either mourning after, or rejoicing in God.

Tuesday, the 20th, we came to Ashborn, in the Peak of Derbyshire, and not knowing any friends in the town, we called at an inn ; but I was soon found out and desired to preach in the street, which I immediately did. on Romans viii, 13, to a very attentive congregation. The landlady of the inn behaved remarkably civil : we then set off, and I preached that evening at Derby.

Wednesday, the 21st, I preached at Loughborough, and on Thursday, the 22d. at five o'clock in the morning. At noon I preached at Mountsorrel, and in the evening at Leicester. I bless God I had a present reward in preaching ; my own soul was abundantly refreshed while I was speaking to others. The three following days I spent comfortably with the little society at Northampton, and on Tuesday, the 27th, came to London. This year I laboured in London with Mr. Bumstead and Mr. Atlay. But though I was comfortably situated, in many respects, I was not without various trials. Indeed, I have always found that sweets and bitters, comforts and trials, when blended together by the hand of a wise and gracious God, have not only been best for me, but absolutely *necessary* in this world of danger. And so I found it this year. For I hope I can say all things worked together for good to my own soul ; and that, so far from hindering, they rather promoted my usefulness among the people. And thus I have found it ever since. Therefore, O Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt ! Thou knowest what is best for me at all times and under all circumstances. Make me then the object of thy constant care, so shall I be safe from danger while on earth, and praise thee to all eternity.

The two following years I laboured in the Bristol circuit, where the Lord was pleased to bless me both in my labours and in my own soul; but yet not with that degree of success which he was pleased to bestow on me in the year 1767.

Sunday, December the 18th, I was desired to preach a funeral sermon for Mrs. Hall, late wife of Mr. John Hall, of Bedminster, by whom she had several children. She was a tender mother, a loving and obedient wife, one who constantly attended on the means of grace, and adorned her profession in her life and conversation.

As she was one day in the market, she was instantly deprived of her speech and of the use of her limbs. She was carried into her brother's house, where she was visited by several of her friends. After awhile her speech was restored, so that she was able to declare the goodness of God. She would not speak about the things of this world; but told us she was happy in the Redeemer's love. She lay a few days, and then returned in triumph to God.

Though she was very comely in her lifetime, yet she appeared far more so after her death. When the spirit took its flight, it left the heavenly stamp on her face. Her brother (Mr. William Wait) was so much affected with the sight, that he could scarcely look on her. She brought to my mind that verse in one of our funeral hymns:—

“ Ah, lovely appearance of death!
 No sight upon earth is so fair;
 Not all the gay pageants that breathe
 Can with a dead body compare:
 With solemn delight I survey
 The corpse when the spirit is fled,
 In love with the beautiful clay,
 And longing to lie in its stead.”

I preached her funeral sermon the next Sabbath day. The house was quite crowded with attentive hearers, and our Lord crowned the assembly with his presence; we shared in the joy of our departed friend, and had an anticipation of the celestial banquet.

Some time after this we began to preach at the Limekilns, near Bristol. We went there every Thursday night. By this means several were convinced of sin and

converted to God. I joined about twenty of them in society in one night. They were quite in earnest while I continued in those parts, and I am informed continue the same to this day. Lord, help them to endure to the end, that we may all rejoice at thy right hand, when thou comest in the clouds of heaven.

This year another friend of mine (Mrs. Elizabeth Rose) died. She was a sensible woman, and had adorned the Gospel for many years. I visited her in her last illness. And as nothing had passed through her for several days, she felt the most excruciating pain. She was never heard to murmur; but was quite resigned to the will of God. When I saw her she brought to my mind a saying of Seneca: "That a philosopher contending with, and getting above, the misery of human life, was a sight fit to invite the gods to be spectators." And may we not say that God and angels look down with great satisfaction on a Christian triumphing over pain and the fear of death? Even so died this gracious woman, after eight or ten days' illness, and is now added to the number of those who praise God and the Lamb for evermore.

This year also Abraham Peacock, of Kingswood, died. And, as I have reason to believe that I was instrumental in his conversion, and had him under my care at the time of his death; it may not be judged improper to subjoin a brief account of him in this place.

About thirty years ago, being a collier, he and several others were shut up in a pit, by the water of an old mine breaking in upon them. The whole country being alarmed, abundance of men set to work and drew out the water. The prisoners were confined eleven days before they were delivered, in which they ate their candles, chewed their shoe leather, and drank water; which, by a kind providence, preserved their lives. But all this had no good effect on Abraham; for he still continued a most vile and abandoned profligate.

Some time after this he entered on board a ship bound for Jamaica. The ship was cast away, and he and several of the crew escaped to a rock, where they were confined six days. Then, through a kind providence, an English vessel came by and took them in, and brought them home to England. Abraham then went to his old

employment ; but continued a rebel against God. About seven years ago, when we had that glorious revival in Kingswood, he was told how happy the people were who met together to pray, and sing praises to God.—“Why, then,” said Abraham, “I will go and hear them.” When he came, the word reached his stubborn heart, and he was brought into deep convictions. But one night, when he was in bed, the Lord removed his load and set his soul at liberty. He arose and came away to the school about midnight, and called Mr. Hindmarsh. He then told him, “I believe I am going to die, for the Lord has forgiven all my sins.” After this he had a very poor state of health, and was not able to work. By this means he soon became so exceeding low in his circumstances that he had neither bread to eat nor a bed to lie upon. I mentioned his case to a few friends in Bristol, and among us we procured him a bed and other necessities. For seven years he continued a great monument both of sufferings and of patience, and then died in peace. O the riches, both of the wisdom and goodness of God ! How abundantly were they displayed in the case of this poor man, who had spent between fifty and sixty years in a regular course of daring wickedness ; and that God should not only preserve him amid it all, but at last convert his soul, provide for his body, and then take him to himself, to behold his face in righteousness, and to praise him to all eternity !

The two years I stayed in and about Bristol I had full employment. For, beside riding often ten, twelve, fifteen, or twenty miles a day, through all weathers, I had to preach twice a day frequently, and sometimes thrice, beside meeting the societies in various ways, visiting the sick, &c., which I found to be very wearisome to flesh and blood. But when I considered what a charge I had, having near fifteen hundred souls put under my care, exclusive of all the thousands who heard me continually ; more especially when I considered that each of these souls was of more value than ten thousand worlds ; all within me cried out, Who is sufficient for these things ? And I could scarce refrain from saying, with him of old, Lord, send by whom thou wilt send, only send not by me ! And I hope I shall never lose sight of the great-

ness of this undertaking, or the awfulness of the charge committed unto me: but, rather, that I shall see and feel more and more of its great and tremendous importance every day of my life: that I may be more serious and humble more upright and earnest before Him who hath called me to this work, and before whom I shall shortly stand to give an account of my stewardship.

Friday, July 19th, 1776, we left Bristol, and spent about a week with our friends in Bath. Here we never had much, if any, prospect of doing any great good till very lately. This year I added several new members, and many others found peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. When we left Bath we called on a few societies in our way, and came to London on Monday, the 29th. This year I laboured in much peace with Mr. Hindmarsh and Mr. Pilmoor. When we are free from outward trouble, there is danger lest we should fall into a lukewarm state. If we desire to live holy and happy we should keep God and eternity always in view.

Wednesday, June 4th, 1777, we left London, and went into the west of England. Providence was very kind to us in this journey. As we were going off Salisbury Plain, I got out of the chaise to walk down a very steep hill; when we came to the bottom, as I was going in again, between my wife and me we dropped the reins, which hung on the horse's heels; this made him set off in a full gallop, which he continued for near a mile, with both of us in the chaise. He then turned off the road through a narrow gateway, leading to an inn, as if guided in every step by an invisible hand. The inn yard was very narrow, that he could neither turn to the right nor the left, and the stable fronting, he was obliged to stop. O God! surely thou didst then give thine angels charge to watch over thy poor servants who put their trust in thee: After we had breakfasted here, we set off again and went on through the societies to Cornwall, where I spent about five weeks with great satisfaction. In many places the congregations were so large that I was obliged to preach abroad. I found my soul was much blessed. I rejoiced to see many of my old acquaintance and countrymen walking in the way to heaven.

Friday, July 18th, we left Cornwall, and came safe to Bristol on Tuesday, the 29th. After our conference ended, we set off for the Chester circuit, where we arrived safe on Monday, August 18th. This is a trying circuit to flesh and blood; our journeys are very long, and in many places the congregations very small; yet it pleased God to bless our labours and increase our number.

Friday, January 16th, 1778, I came to Whit-Church; but my cough and hoarseness were such that it was with difficulty I could speak so as to be understood. I desired Mr. Brown to supply my place a few days, while I rested at Mr. Sim's, at Alperham. But, as I was not willing to be idle, I wrote two hymns, one for the morning, and another for the evening. Since that time I have wrote about sixty more. I find this to be both a pleasing and profitable exercise; it keeps the mind quite engaged on the subject, and lifted up to God in prayer for assistance.

Thursday, July 23d, we left Chester, and I preached that evening at Norwich. Sunday, the 26th, I preached at Manchester in the morning, and the Lord was present to bless us. In the afternoon I preached at Oldham. But O what an alteration is here! The last time I was in this place I was kept a prisoner in a public house, among drunkards, swearers, and fighters; but now, as soon as I entered their new chapel, they sung a hymn of praise to God on my account.

From hence I went to Leeds, where our conference began Tuesday the 4th. I laboured this year in the Bradforth circuit, with Mr. Hopper and Mr. Johnson, two of our old preachers, who have adorned the Gospel, and been useful labourers in our Lord's vineyard for many years. We had some increase in our circuit this year, and some found peace with God. But I find Satan is very busy in every place. At Halifax he caused a division in the society about an angel with a trumpet in his hand, which one party would have fixed on the top of the sounding board over the pulpit, but the other would not consent to it. And so warm were they on each side, that the preachers could not reconcile them: so the affair was left to the decision of Mr. Wesley.—When he came he gave judgment against the angel; and,

to put an end to all future strife, Mr. Joseph Bradford made a burnt-sacrifice of it on the altar of peace. Is it not strange that men of common sense, and who profess an uncommon degree of religion, should contend so warmly about such trifles as these?

Saturday, July 3d, 1779, we left Halifax, and came to Bradforth. I continued here, and in the neighbourhood, about a week, taking leave of our friends in hopes to meet again where pain and parting shall be no more.

We then came on through the societies to London, the place of my present destination; where I labour in connection with a number of my brethren whom I highly esteem. I believe we love as brethren, and that our labour is not altogether in vain in the Lord.

Upon the whole, when I look back on the many years I have now spent in testifying the grace of God, though I have not made that advancement in the way which I might have done, yet I can say, to his glory, he has so kept me, that none can lay any thing to my charge with regard to my moral conduct, since God first spoke peace to my soul, in April, 1749.

I am clearly convinced that God has called me to preach his everlasting Gospel. And the more so, because it has pleased him by his Spirit to confirm the word of his messenger. Indeed I am fully persuaded that he does confirm the word of all whom he hath sent, by using them in turning sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

And I believe that Christ is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto God through him. I cannot credit those who are continually telling the people that the Canaanite must dwell in the land to humble them: that is, Belial must be a partner with Christ in this work; as though Christ was not sufficient to humble the souls of God's children, without calling in sin and Satan to his assistance. "Learn of me," saith the Redeemer, "for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

I bless God, I can say to his glory, I do find constant communion with him. And I pay no regard to those who tell us, "You must come down from the mount: and you must not mind your frames and feelings." No!

If I have the peace of God, do I not feel it? If I do not feel it, I have it not. And if I do not feel joy in the Holy Ghost, it does not exist. And shall I not feel it more and more? I trust I shall, if I go on from faith to faith: if I daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I bless God my heart is engaged in his work; and there is nothing gives me greater satisfaction than to hear of the prosperity of Zion. Yet how much longer I shall be able to travel I cannot tell, as I have a settled rheumatism in my knee and thigh, and am far past the meridian of life. But in all circumstances I have chosen God for my portion, and the lot of my inheritance for ever. He hath been my helper hitherto; and I trust he will help me to the end. O Lord! forsake me not in my old age. Lay thine everlasting arms beneath me; and give me a safe and comfortable passage through the valley of the shadow of death: and then bring me to thy holy hill, to praise thy name for ever!

To conclude: I cannot better express my present state and future prospect, than in the two following stanzas of Mr. Oliver's beautiful hymn to the God of Abraham:—

Though nature's strength decay,
And earth and hell withstand,
To Canaan's bounds I urge my way,
At his command:
The wat'ry deep I pass,
With Jesus in my view,
And through the howling wilderness
My way pursue.

The goodly land I see,
With peace and plenty blest;
A land of sacred liberty,
And endless rest:
There milk and honey flow,
And oil and wine abound;
And trees of life for ever grow,
With mercy crown'd.

MR. CHRISTOPHER HOPPER.

TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

Coln, May 20, 1780.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I never had the least desire or design to trouble others with my insignificant life. And I know how difficult it is for a man to speak of himself: but as you desire it, I will do as well as I can.

I kept a diary the first year after I set out from New-castle-upon-Tyne, for Ireland. At my return I took a fever at Newlands. After my recovery I looked over my journal with a view to go on; but I saw so many blunders and imperfections therein, that I immediately committed it to the fire. Since that time I have kept no regular account of my little labours; therefore I am under a great disadvantage in giving any tolerable account of them.

I have looked over my manuscripts, and have found a few memoranda, which have assisted me a little. Many other things I have committed to memory, which never have, and I hope never will be erased.

As I have had the pleasure of travelling with you many hundred miles, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, these last five and thirty years, I have been much helped by reading over your journals, to trace out my crooked path. By these few assistances I have endeavoured to give some account of my nativity, childhood, and callings; the various dealings of God with me from my youth up to my conversion; my call to preach the Gospel, and the opposition and success I met with when I first set out.

But I have given very little account of any of my labours, trials, comforts, or success, these last eight and twenty years. I apprehend these would swell too large for your present purpose: I will therefore leave them to that great day, when the righteous Judge will reward every man according to his works.

May the Lord succeed your labours, give you peace

in the way, a joyful exit, and then a crown of glory.—
Pray for me, who am, reverend and dear sir, your unworthy son in the Gospel of Christ,

CHRISTOPHER HOPPER.

I WAS born at Low-Coalburne, in the parish of Ryton, in the county of Durham, on the 25th of December, 1722. Moses Hopper, my father, was a farmer: my mother, whose name was Ann, was daughter to George Barkiss, farmer, in the same county. They were both of good repute, and much attached to the Church of England, but strangers to vital religion.

My mother had nine children, six sons and three daughters, of whom I was the youngest. When I was about five years old I was sent to school to one Mr. Alderson, a man of piety and good understanding, who taught those under his care, not only the branches of learning he professed, but the fear of God and the first principles of religion. He catechized us twice every week, and made us attend the Church every Lord's day, and all holy days appointed for public service. After I had learned to read, write, and understand a little of the mathematics, I lost my beloved master, who made a most awful exit. He had been, as I thought, more devout one week than common. The Sabbath following he received the sacrament at Ryton church: some days after a few gentlemen with fair words persuaded him to play a civil game of cards; but afterward he fell into great distress of mind, and could not properly attend his school, which was often left to the care of his eldest son and me. The spring following, after many sore conflicts, he sunk into deep despair, and then drowned himself.

This melancholy event made my heart tremble, and was a means of bringing some serious thoughts into my mind, about heaven, hell, death, and judgment. I began to distinguish between vice and virtue, the godly and ungodly men. These impressions remained till I took a severe illness, which continued near two years, and reduced me to a mere skeleton. Mr. Foster, who attended me, pronounced me incurable.

This alarmed me, and filled my heart with slavish

fear. I judged it was high time to prepare for a future state; and according to the light I had, began the business without delay. I read my Bible with much pleasure, prayer, and attention. The more I read it, the more I loved it. Many verses, and some favourite chapters which I understood best, made such a deep impression upon me that I soon had them by heart. The Practice of Piety, a form of prayers, and a psalm book, were my library. I prayed and sung with fear and some degree of joy. I had very slight notions of my depraved nature and the sin of unbelief; but clear views of my actual transgressions. I had been addicted to swear when I was put out of humour; and to lie when I could gain any thing by it, or cover or excuse a fault. I had been apt to pilfer among the children, when I could do it with a good grace.

I was very proud, and prone to anger; yea, of a cruel disposition. I took a diabolical pleasure in hanging dogs, worrying cats, and killing birds and insects, mangling and cutting them to pieces. One instance of my inhumanity I perfectly remember to this day. One evening as I was returning from school with some of my friendly associates, we found a great number of frogs collected together in a marshy place; we proclaimed war against them; we armed ourselves with stones, and with all the fury of little fiends, murdered the poor, innocent, defenceless creatures. We then left the field in great triumph. But God soon requited me. That night I dreamed I fell into a deep place full of frogs, and they seized on me from head to foot, and began to eat the flesh off my bones. I was in great terror, and found exquisite pain until I awoke, sweating and trembling, and half dead with fear.

About this time my dear father died of a consumption; I hope a true penitent. He was interred at Ryton church, with great solemnity, among his ancestors. I was then left to the care of my indulgent mother and brethren.—Soon after my father's death my eldest brother married, and they divided my father's farm, and the goods and chattels he left, among them; but I was neglected and overlooked, like one that did not belong to the family; but this did not give me the least concern. My disorder

still continued with my convictions. I prayed, wept, and looked toward the hill of Sion. I found comfort and a good hope through grace. I waited every day for my final dissolution, and longed to be with Christ. I loved God, the Redeemer, and all mankind. I was happy. After some time it pleased God to restore me to perfect health, beyond all human expectation. After my recovery, my mind was quickly drawn after the world again. I saw transitory objects in another point of view than I had done during the time of my illness. My love to God and religion, and my desire after another world, soon grew very cold. I quenched the Holy Spirit, who departed and left me again to the folly of my own heart.

As I was the youngest child of the family, and had nothing left me, I judged it would be proper to think of some business to procure bread. And my mother and brother being willing to put me to a grammar school, and give me a good education, I accepted the offer, and concluded it was the best thing I could do: but in the interim, one Mr. Armstrong, a shopkeeper, wanted a boy and sent for me. I embraced the opportunity, and prepared to go without delay. I thought I should escape the wearisome task of study, having nothing to do but to improve the learning I had already, to qualify me for a merchant's apprentice. My mother accompanied me to Mr. Armstrong's, and put me in possession of my new place. I went with great pleasure; and met a kind reception. After I had been some time on trial, I was to be bound by indenture for seven years. This put my youthful mind into a new chain of reasoning. I thought I would never be bound to stand so long behind a counter; therefore, in spite of all persuasion, I left my place and returned home.

After this a project entered into my head that I would be a musician. I told my brother. He approved of it, bought me a violin, and provided me a master. I began with great assiduity, and concluded I had found the very thing that would make me happy. I played away all my convictions, lost my taste for spiritual things, and banished all thoughts of a future world. I now employed myself in doing some little things in the house and about the farm; and all the time I had to spare, I spent in

playing, singing, dancing, fishing, fowling, and whatever came next to my hand. I was then between fifteen and sixteen years of age, and began to think of some employment whereby I might have money to support my foolish desires. My brother kept wagon horses. When the wagon ways were first framed between the new coal mines and the river Tyne, the farmers were under an obligation to their landlords to employ a certain number of horses for that purpose. I was a strong active young man, and thought I could manage a wagon very well. My brother was willing I should make the trial, and gave me a proper horse for that service. I soon made a great proficiency in this dirty, slavish, and dangerous occupation. And I was hugely pleased with my new department. Novelty pleases, whether the man sits on a throne or a dunghill. I frequently boasted of my strength, agility, and skill in this sphere of action, and thought I was arrived at the summit of my preferment: I found it a singular pleasure in whatever company I was, to talk of feeding and guiding wagon horses, of wagons and wagon ways, the nature and value of coals; and concluded I only wanted a little money to make me a fitter, or a London crimp. My vain mind was as much taken up with those things as the mathematicians with their abstruse science, or the philosophers with the wonders of nature. I followed this business and the various branches of agriculture for about five years. During this period of my life I was given up to folly. I greedily pursued, according to my ability, all the pleasures of the world. I spent nights and days together, in hunting, cock-fighting, card-playing, horse races, or whatever the devil brought to town or country. And O, grief of heart! gentlemen, clergymen, mechanics, and peasants made up the crowd! But in the enjoyment of these poor toys I had many severe checks, and sorrowful moments. The universe appeared as a vault wherein true comfort was entombed; and the sun himself as a lamp to show the gloomy horrors of a guilty mind. I often said in my cool intervals, Hath the great God of love provided no better things than these for his reasonable creatures? Now at this time I was my own master, and lived without

control. I followed my former pleasures, but with a trembling hand. I found Satan's service perfect drudgery, and all earthly objects empty and vain.

In this dull, melancholy round, I dragged on for some time, without any real comfort or solid satisfaction. I was not happy, yet I believed there was something which could make me so, but I knew not what it was, or where to find it. Sometimes I reflected on what I felt in my affliction when I was a youth; but it appeared as a dream. I was frequently in great and imminent danger. But through the interposition of a kind, unerring providence, I escaped ten thousand snares and deaths, by night and day, at home and abroad. One evening in particular, two of my companions and I were riding home in a wagon very jovially, and as we were passing over a very high battery, the horse started suddenly to one side, and snatched the wagon from the planks: immediately it overset, and turned over and over, to the bottom of the hill. The trembling spectators who beheld this awful event concluded with shrieks and cries, "They are all killed; their bones are broken in a thousand pieces." But to their great astonishment, and to our unspeakable comfort, we were very little hurt.

After I had recovered my reason, and found I was alive, and out of hell, my stubborn heart yielded to my almighty Deliverer. I feared his great name, wept for joy, and was overwhelmed with grief for my folly. This deliverance wrought a deep conviction in my heart. The true light shined on my dark soul, and God laid me in the dust. I only wanted a spiritual guide to show me the way; but, alas! I could not find him in the country.

In May, 1742, we heard a strange report of one Wesley, a Church clergyman, that had been at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and had preached in Sandgate to many thousands who heard him with astonishment. This new thing made a huge noise. The populace entertained various conjectures about him; but few, if any, could tell the motive on which he came, or the end he had in view. He made a short blaze, soon disappeared, and left us in great consternation. Some time after, his brother Charles came and preached at Tanfield-Cross. I ran with the multitude to hear this strange preacher. When I saw a man in a

clergyman's habit, preaching at a public cross to a large auditory, some gaping, some laughing, and some weeping, I wondered what this could mean. When he had concluded, some said, He is a good man, and sent to reform our land : others said, Nay : he is come to pervert and deceive us, and we ought to stone him out of our coasts. I said, If he is a good man, good will be done, and it is plain we want a reformation ; but if he is an impostor, he can only leave us as he found us, that is, without hope and without God in the world. I cannot tell what induced me to go so far, but I found I was in danger of being called a Methodist, and was glad to dismiss the conversation with a smile, and a piece of drollery.

In November, Mr. Wesley returned to Newcastle, formed a religious society, and laid the foundation of the Orphan house. At the same time he visited Tanfield, Leigh, Wickham, Swalwell, and Horseley. His name was then well known in town and country.

All mouths were filled with Wesley and his followers : some for, and many against them. I knew very little of the matter, but thought it was most prudent to join the general voice against this new way.

The spring following, 1743, John Brown, a plain farmer, removed from Tanfield-Leigh to the Low-Spenn, and invited Mr. Wesley to his house. I then heard occasionally those preachers who I thought could tell their story well, without stammering : but still found much fault with this strange method of proceeding. At this time there was a great clamour about religion, among all sects and parties, and I made a bustle among the rest. I said, I will read my Bible, say my prayers, go to my own parish church, reform my life, and be good and pious without the scandal of the cross. Alas ! I did not consider, " No cross, no crown."

I hobbled on in this lame, ignorant manner, till at last I became deeply serious. I saw there was more in religion than I enjoyed or understood. I saw that God had been striving with me from my infant days. I looked back with astonishment on his loud calls, compassionate helps, tender mercies, and great deliverances. He had raised me from the gates of death when all human help failed.

He had saved me from perils and dangers by night and by day. He had richly provided for me, when I was left to myself very young. A sight of these favours raised in my cold heart some sensations of gratitude to my bountiful Benefactor. I said in my heart, Shall I still trifle with the almighty God of heaven and earth? Shall I fly in the face of my infinite Creator? Shall I play with eternal things? Will God always strive with the children of men? My few days are passing away like a shadow; pale death is approaching; the Judge is standing at the door; eternity, eternity, is come! Alas! I am not ready. I am in my sins—unholy, unhappy, and therefore not prepared to die.

I will now cry to God for mercy. He willeth not the death of a sinner. It is his pleasure to save me from sin and the punishment due to it. He waits to be gracious, that his great name may be exalted. "He is good to all, and his mercy is over all his works." I am a monument of his sparing goodness, I will therefore look up and hope in his word. Behold, this is the accepted time, behold, this is the day of salvation. God hath sent his servants to show poor sinners the way of life. I was then determined to hear and judge for myself. God had now prepared my heart for the reception of the truth. I said, I will no longer be led by the laughing multitude, nor be deluded with the noise of vain tongues.

The Sabbath day following, Mr. Reeves preached at the Low-Spenn, at one o'clock in the afternoon. I heard him with great attention, but found a veil on my heart. I did not clearly see God's method of justifying a guilty sinner, through faith in the blood of his Son.

In the evening he preached again on these words, "And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest of these is love." In his plain, pathetic manner, he gave us a definition of these principal graces, with their inseparable concomitants, and showed the unspeakable happiness of all those who had a saving *faith*, a good *hope*, and the *love* of God. The word came home to my heart with energy. The veil was removed. The true light shined upon me, and I said, Alas, I am undone! If these things are true, and doubtless they are, I have only the faith of a devil, the hope of a hypocrite, and the

love of this present evil world. My mouth was stopped. I stood guilty before God. My stout heart melted like wax before the fire. I trembled at the word. My strength left me. God frowned ; his law condemned ; conscience roared ; Satan raged ; and the pit was ready to receive me.

I quietly retired from the crowd into a little parlour to cover my shame. I sat down on the side of a bed, and reclined my guilty head on the pillow, in great distress of mind. It was the cry of my heart, God be merciful to me a sinner ! Save, Lord, or I perish ! Save or I am lost, for ever lost ! My all is guilt, pollution, misery, and helplessness. In this wretched situation I continued some time, shut up in unbelief as in a prison. I could only say, *Lord, help me !* He then heard my cry and sent me relief. A glorious light shone into my heart, and discovered to me the blessed plan of man's redemption through the blood of a crucified Saviour. I saw God had fulfilled his great original promise. He sent his Son to save sinners, the chief of sinners. He lived, suffered, and died for a lost world. "He tasted death for every man. He gave himself a ransom for all." I said in my trouble, The good Shepherd came from heaven to earth to "seek and save that which was lost, to bring again that which was driven away, to bind up that which was broken, and to strengthen that which was sick." But I am lost, I am driven to the mouth of hell, ready to drop into the flames ; I am broken to pieces ; I am sick of sin, sick of myself, and sick of a vain world : I will therefore look unto the Lord ; *my God will hear me*. He hath died for me. I shall, yea, doubtless, I shall obtain mercy after all I have done. The *God of truth* hath promised *mercy* ; the *Son of his love* hath procured *mercy* ; the *Spirit of truth* is ready to reveal *mercy* ; and the messengers of peace are come to proclaim *mercy*, free *mercy*, to every perishing sinner, through the blood of the everlasting covenant ! I said, *I can, I will, I do* believe in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. I am freely justified. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. God is now my God in Christ. The love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost given unto me. The spirit of bondage is gone. The Spirit of

adoption is come. I can now cry, Abba Father. The same Spirit beareth witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. No enmity—no wrath—no curse—no condemnation—the ruined sinner is saved. I then found a glorious and undeniable change. God, Christ, angels, men, heaven, earth, and the whole creation appeared to me in a new light, and stood related to me in a manner I never knew before. I found love to my God, to his yoke, to his cross, and to his saints, to his friends and enemies. I said, This is Bible religion, scriptural Christianity, let men call it what they please; a delusion, enthusiasm, Methodism, or Mohammedism, that is nothing to me; hard names do not change the nature of the thing. I then went on my way rejoicing; a wonder to my father's family; to all that knew me; and to myself. All my idols fell to the ground before the ark of God. I found a perfect hatred to sin, and a complete victory over it.

The whole tenor of my life and conversation was new. *Free grace, infinite mercy, boundless love*, made the change. My heart, my tongue, my hands, were now, in my little way, employed for my loving God. I was no longer of the world, therefore the world began immediately to hate me. Some said, Ah! what think you! Christopher Hopper is converted! Others said, He hath received the Holy Ghost! Others said, He is mad; keep far from him; come not near his habitation. Some, of a more compassionate turn, pitied me; but all agreed I had renounced my baptism, left the Church, and was in a dangerous situation.

Soon after, Mr. Wesley came to Low-Spenn, formed a little society, and made me a leader, to help and watch over them. I was but a novice, a young, raw disciple, unskilled in the word of righteousness: but faith in Christ, and the love of God in my heart, overcame all the powers of darkness. I found unspeakable pleasure in doing and suffering the will of God. I laboured diligently with my hands: I owed no man any thing: I had enough for myself, and a little to spare for others. I attended four or five meetings every week: we prayed, sung psalms and hymns, read the Bible, and exhorted one another to fear and love God. The power of the Lord was present

to heal ; he owned his own work, and gave us prosperity. Many of my old companions were awakened ; also my poor old mother, one of my sisters, and one of my brothers, who had been a champion in the devil's cause, but has been an ornament to religion from that time to this day. The fire now kindled, and the flame spread. I had one invitation after another to High-Spenn, Barlow, Woodside, Prudhoe, Newlands, Blanchland, Durham, Sunderland, and many other places.

As yet I had not examined my call to preach the Gospel, nor considered the consequences of such an undertaking. I was sweetly carried on with a strong, prevailing influence, and a loving desire to promote the glory of God. I saw the world dead in trespasses and sins, void of light, holiness, and happiness. I therefore thirsted after their salvation, and thought it my duty to promote it. God blessed his word. Sinners were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. But the devil was highly displeased ; he saw his kingdom was in danger, and immediately proclaimed war against me. I met with great persecution, many discouragements, and much opposition in every place. Men of all ranks used their power and influence to stop this blessed work of God. They spoke all manner of evil against the work, and the instruments employed therein. They dispensed with two or three awakened clergymen tolerably well. These were regularly ordained men of learning ; gentlemen and divines : but to see a ploughman, or an honest mechanic stand up to preach the Gospel, it was insufferable. Hell was moved from beneath ; a council was called ; the edict came forth, and war commenced ! Laymen and ecclesiastics joined, heart and hand, to suppress these pestilent fellows : not with acts of kindness, Scripture, or reason ; but invectives and lies, dirt, rotten eggs, brickbats, stones, and cudgels : these were Satan's arguments in vindication of his own cause. It was the common cry in town and country, " Press them for soldiers ; send them on board a man of war ; transport them ; beat them ; stone them ; send them to prison, or knock out their brains, and despatch them at once, *for there is no law for them.*"*

* This was a great mistake. There was law for us ; but we

Several of my fellow sufferers had shared honest John Nelson's fate already, and I expected to be the next; they had their eyes on me; they daily pursued me as Saul did David: they waited for an opportunity to seize on the prey, but the hand of the Lord was with me, so I escaped! He delivered me by various means, at sundry times, and often in a very remarkable manner. Once, in particular, as I was preaching at Wickham, to a quiet, attentive congregation, the constable came, with his attendants, to apprehend me; they guarded the door, and stood with fierce impatience to seize me. When I had concluded I stepped down, went through the midst of them, was conveyed through a window, and went quietly home, leaving the peace officer and his gentlemen to end the dispute with loud words, hard blows, and bloody faces!

When I first set out to do all the good I could, without fee or reward, I did not foresee this violent storm. I began now to consider what latitude I was in, and whether it would not be a point of wisdom to tack about, and steer for some quiet harbour. There had been many things said and wrote against this new way; especially against those illiterate preachers who so exceedingly disturbed the world. I found some doubts concerning my call to the work, and almost wished they might be well grounded, that I might, with a good conscience, desist from preaching.

I was therefore determined to examine myself, whether I had a right to preach; or whether I had rashly entered into a work that did not belong to me. One evening I went into a wood, by the side of Darwent-water, much dejected. Clouds and darkness surrounded me, and my spirit was troubled within me: I said, My enemies are too strong for me; there are few on the Lord's side, but myriads against him: what shall I do? Alas! "My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." I am a *worm*, and no *man*. O my God! let me enjoy this sweet solitude, and see my friends and companions no more! Let me live as a hermit in this lonely desert till my few days are ended; then shall my weary spirit be at rest. I did not want ease, wealth, or honour;

could not find a magistrate who had courage or honesty enough to put it in force.

but to know, do, and suffer the will of my Lord and Master. I thought, if I have made a mistake, God will forgive me, and I will take shame to myself: I will desist from preaching, and live and die a private Christian. But if God hath called me to publish the Gospel of his dear Son, I must bear a public testimony, and leave the event to him. In the midst of these reflections it occurred to my mind, What evidence is sufficient to satisfy me in this weighty matter? I only want a rational, scriptural evidence. Let me then inquire, with prayer and fasting, What reason have I to believe that I am called to preach the Gospel? 1. I have heard and believed the Gospel, and found it to be the power of God to the salvation of my own soul; and I believe it to be the powerful means which God hath appointed to reclaim and save lost sinners, Romans i, 16. 2. I believe all power is given to Jesus Christ in heaven and in earth; therefore he alone hath power and authority to call, qualify, and thrust out labourers into his own harvest, Matt. xxxviii, 18. Hence I learn that this power cannot be acquired by human art or learning, or purchased with gold or silver, Acts viii, 20. 3. I believe those who are called and put into this work by him, shall turn sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, Acts xxvi, 18. 4. I have a rational conviction that God hath committed unto me the word of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v, 8: I have this treasure in an earthen vessel, in a feeble, mortal body; that the excellence of the power may be of God, and not of man, 2 Cor. iv, 7. I find, by daily experience, "we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. iii, 5. 5. According to this conviction I have preached the Gospel to sinners dead in sin, and they have been awakened and converted to God. Children of the devil have become children of God and heirs of eternal life.

Having considered these things, I concluded my call to preach the Gospel was consistent with Scripture, reason, and experience. I was filled with joy: I said, "I have now the countenance of my God; the hands of his dear Son, the bishop of my soul, laid upon me; the approbation of the three presbyters sent by him; the prayers of his dear people; the testimony of a good con-

science, and the pleasure of seeing Zion prosper. I therefore pray earnestly that God may incline, persuade, and sweetly influence my heart, and open my mouth by his Holy Spirit, to dispense the word of truth to a world of perishing sinners. This I desire to do continually, in season and out of season, according to the ability he hath given me." My drooping spirit now revived. The fear of men and devils departed from me, and I set out with double courage. I could say, "Jehovah is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Then the word of the Lord came unto me saying, "Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." My heart replied, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The Lord was with me night and day: his threatenings passed over me; his promises comforted me; and his precepts were my delight. I could say,—

To me, with thy dear name, is given
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven.

In the year 1744 I taught a school at Barlow, in the parish of Ryton. My time was employed six days in teaching the children under my care the branches of learning I professed, and the first principles of Christianity. I spent every Sabbath, and all my vacant hours, in preaching, reading, praying, visiting the sick, and conversing with all that Providence put in my way. God was with me, and blessed my weak labours. Sinners were converted, believers multiplied, and my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour. But Satan did not like this work: therefore he stirred up the rector of Ryton and his curate, with those under their influence, to prevent me. They gave me first hard words, and then hard blows. In a little time I was summoned to appear in the spiritual court at Durham, to answer for my conduct. I did not know what I had done. But was soon informed that I was impeached for teaching a school without license; and, what was still worse, for calling sinners to repent-

ance, and warning the wicked to flee from the wrath to come; (an offence that cannot be overlooked by men who know not God!) but God raised me up friends, who stood by me, and defended my cause against all my adversaries.

After this troublesome affair was ended, I met with a trial of another kind. Before I was awakened I was deeply in love with one Jane Richardson, a farmer's daughter, and an agreeable young woman. She was my first love; and had laid fast hold on my youthful heart. She had every accomplishment I wanted, but religion. Alas! she was unacquainted with God. This was a bar indeed! I found a desire to break off all correspondence with her; but was afraid she could not bear it. I was greatly troubled, and prayed for Divine direction. God was pleased to hear, and grant my request. She was soon awakened, and found peace with God. All objections being removed, on May the 28th, 1745, we were joined together in Ryton church. She was a loving wife, a faithful friend, and a very agreeable companion. She made my joys and sorrows her own. We worshipped God in spirit and in truth, and rejoiced in the Son of his love.

The same evening I preached at the Low-Spenn. The Lord was with us, and we praised his name together.—We lived a few months with my wife's friends at the Smeals, near Darwent, in a most loving, agreeable manner. God made us of one heart and mind, and united our souls together, by one spirit, in humble love.

In the year 1746 I removed from Barlow to the preaching house, at Sheephill. I received the preachers, and my other religious friends, with much pleasure. My heart was open; my door was open; and my little table free for strangers. I gave up my soul, and body, and substance to my adorable Saviour, and grieved I had no more to give.

I commonly preached, or met a class every evening, after I had dismissed my scholars. I preached twice or thrice, and often four times every Sabbath day. When I had a day or two to spare from my present vocation, I visited Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, and many other towns and villages, ten, twenty, or thirty miles around. Herein I met with much opposition, and was frequently in great jeopardy. Indeed I did not much regard a little

dirt, a few rotten eggs, the sound of a cow's horn, the noise of bells, or a few snow balls, in their season ; but sometimes I was saluted with blows, stones, brickbats, and bludgeons. These I did not well like ; they were not pleasing to flesh and blood. I sometimes lost a little skin, and once* a little blood, which was drawn from my forehead with a sharp stone. I wore a patch a few days, and was not ashamed ; I gloried in the cross. And when my small sufferings abounded for the sake of Christ, my comfort abounded much more. I never was more happy in my own soul, or more blessed in my labours.

The latter end of July, 1747, I had a call to visit Cornwood, and met with a kind reception. I preached several times among the people called Quakers : I hope good was done.

On my return I had an invitation to preach at Allendale town. A great congregation attended, who behaved well, and heard the word gladly. The latter end of December I visited Allendale again. A glorious work broke out. The Lord stretched out his hand to save sinners. Mr. Topping, minister of that place, used all his art, power and influence, to stop it ; but he could do nothing ; his strength was perfect weakness against the Lord.

I went from town to town, and from house to house, singing, praying, and preaching the word ; and great multitudes followed from place to place, weeping, and seeking Him that was crucified. Great numbers were awakened, and found peace with God, through the blood of the Lamb. I have frequently seen a whole congregation melted into tears, and bowed down before the Lord, as the heart of one man ; especially once, when I was preaching in Mr. Lowe's old barn, at Dod-Bank, the Lord manifested his great power. He wrought for the glory of his own name, and I stood still, and looked on with loving fear and wonder.

In the year 1748 I gave up my school at Sheephill, and every thing that was comfortable and convenient, and removed to Hindley-hill, in Allendale. I lodged with honest Jas. Broadwood, and was as one of his

* It was at Sunderland, in the midst of an outrageous mob of sailors.

family. The presence of the Lord dwelt in his house, and we lived in peace and unity. I formed a society at Hindley-hill, another at Westallen; one at Alesdon, and one at Ninthead: the Lord was among them of a truth. I had now work enough, and God's blessing on my labour. In the latter end of this year I visited Weardale. Some of the brethren attended me from Allendale. It was in a storm of snow that we crossed the quagmires, and enormous mountains. When we came into the Dales, we met with a very cold reception. The enemy had barricaded the place, and made his bulwarks strong. But the Lord made way for his truth. He opened the heart of a poor Scotch shepherd to receive us into his little thatched cabin, where we lodged all night.

The next day I preached under the walls of an old castle. A few children and two or three old women attended, who looked hard at us. When I had done, we followed them into their houses, and talked freely to them in their own language about the kingdom of God. They heard and obeyed the Gospel. The next evening I had a large congregation who heard with much attention, and received the word gladly. Sometime after I preached in private houses, alehouses, cock pits, or wherever I could find a door open. The fire then spread from heart to heart, and God was glorified. This was the beginning of a good work in Weardale, which has continued and increased to this day.

The spring following, in the year 1749, I began teaching a school, near Hindley-hill. But the work of God so increased in my hands, that I could not properly attend it; therefore, in the latter end of the year I gave it up, with all other secular employments, and cast myself on the bounty of my Lord and Master. My little substance soon failed, and I saw nothing before me but beggary and great affliction. Sometimes I was carried above all earthly objects, and had a comfortable view of the heavenly country. At other times I was much depressed, and could see nothing but poverty and distress. I well remember once on the top of a cold mountain, in a violent storm of snow, when the congealed flakes covered me with a white mantle, Satan assaulted me, and pushed me hard to return to my school, or some other business

to procure bread. I staggered through unbelief, and almost yielded to the tempter.

But as the attack was sudden, so the battle was soon over. The Lord sent these words to my heart like lightning, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? and they said, Nothing, Lord," Luke xxii, 35. I answered with a loud voice, "*No-thing, Lord! nothing, Lord!*" All my doubts and fears vanished in a moment, and I went on my way rejoicing!

Constrain'd to cry by love Divine,
My God, thou art for ever mine!

Since that time I have been richly supplied with all good things. This day I am full. I have all and abound; praise God and the Lamb for ever! The work now began to spread in the Dales, Hexamshire, North Tyne, and soon reached Whitehaven.

And now God raised up many preachers; men eminent both for gifts and grace. Some of them continue local, and some are itinerant preachers to this day. The latter end of the year* 1749, I left the Dales, and the dear children God had given me. I rode to the Smeals, where I parted with my dear wife and friends, with melting hearts and many tears.

In those days we had no provision made for preachers' wives, no funds, no stewards. He that had a staff might take it, go without, or stay at home. I then set out for Bristol. I called at Chester, Durham, Stockton, Thirsk, and Knaresborough, and found the Lord in every place. I spent a few days at Leeds. Here God opened my mouth to speak his word, and I hope good was done.

I preached at Bristol on the top of the hill, before the foundation of the preaching house was laid. Large congregations attended, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. I rode on to Halifax, and found their little society at Skiresat-Green. God gave us a blessing. I then rode to Rochdale and preached in the evening, at the widow Whittaker's, to as many as the house could contain. They were turbulent enough, but we were not afraid; for God was with us. Next day I rode to Man-

* From this period I shall only give a short sketch of my travels, and now and then mention a small incident.

chester, and preached that evening in a little garret by the riverside. The congregation multiplied every meeting. On the Sabbath day the old place would not contain them. The multitude was impatient to hear. The old wooden house shook under us, and put the congregation in confusion. Many trembled and some believed. The next evening they procured me an Anabaptist meeting house. The place was crowded. They heard with attention. Many were awakened, and joined themselves to seek and worship God. They immediately bought a piece of ground, and laid the foundation of their first preaching house, which is now their dwelling house. I rode through Cheshire, and joined a society at Alpraham, and another at Pool. It was an humbling time among the opulent farmers: the murrian raging among their cattle. They buried them in the open fields. Their graves were a solemn scene. The hand of the Lord was on the land. I visited the suburbs of Chester. God begun a good work then, which has increased, and continued to this day. I preached at Birmingham, Evesham, Stroud, and Kingswood, and then rode to Bristol, where I spent a few days: and I hope not in vain.

March 20, 1750, I set out with Mr. Wesley for Ireland. We crossed the New Passage into Wales, and reached Cardiff before night.

21. We rode to Brecknock through heavy rain. Mr. Wesley's mare fell twice, and threw him over her head, but without any hurt to man or beast.

22. We rode to Builth. A congregation waited for Howell Harris, but he did not come at the time appointed; so, at their request, Mr. Wesley preached. I then spoke a few words. It was a time of love. The Welsh brethren rejoiced in the Lord. We then rode to Machynleth, and then to Dolgelly, wet and weary enough.

24. We rode to Dannabull. It rained incessantly all the way. Our horses were tired, and we were ready to faint, but God was our strength, and we rejoiced in our little toil.

25. We rode to Baldon ferry. Mr. Jenkin Morgan came to the waterside, crossed over with us into the Isle of Anglesey, and then conducted us to his house, half way between the ferry and Holy-Head.

Sunday 26, Mr. Wesley preached at Howell Thomas's, in Trefollwin parish. In the afternoon at William Pritchard's. The people understood no English, but their looks, sighs, and gestures showed, God was speaking to their hearts !

We then went to lodge with one Mr. Holiday, an exciseman, who lived in a quiet solitary place, where no human voice was heard, but those of the family.

Wednesday 29, we rode to Holy-Head, and sent back our horses with John Jane, who had travelled from Bristol to the Head with three shillings, and had one penny left. About eleven o'clock we went on board. As soon as we sailed we had wind and rain enough without, and a violent storm in the ship. Mr. Griffith of Carnarvonshire, a clumsy, hard-faced man, saluted us with a volley of ribaldry, obscenity, and blasphemy ; but God stopped his mouth, and he was confounded.

Thursday 30, we wrought our way four leagues toward Ireland, but we were driven back in the afternoon to the mouth of the harbour. The wind then shifted two points, and we ventured out again ; by midnight we were got half way over ; but the wind turning full against us, and blowing hard, soon brought us back into the bay again. Mr. Wesley preached that evening on the story of Dives and Lazarus, to a room full of men daubed with gold and silver ; but they were soon satisfied with it, and went away murmuring. After they were gone we had a comfortable meeting with a few plain Welshmen.

Friday 31, we were determined to wait one week longer, if the wind did not serve before. Mr. Wesley preached in the evening. Captain Griffith, with his dear gentlemen, made noise enough ; but our God delivered us.

April 1, we returned to Mr. Holiday's, called at William Pritchard's, then went to Llanerell Ymadd ; but the sons of Belial would not suffer us to enter the place.

Thursday 5, Mr. Wesley preached near the town to a few precious souls, who heard and obeyed the word.

Friday 6, the wind came fair, so we rode to Holy-Head early in the morning, embarked with a fair wind, and in the evening landed at Dublin. I spent a few days in that city, and I hope not in vain. I then visited Port-

arlinton, Edenderry, Mountmellick, Tyrrelspass, Athlone, Birr, and Aughrim, and found the Lord was with me in every place. I had great crosses, but greater comforts. I then rode to Dublin, and spent a few days there with much satisfaction.

July 22, I embarked with Mr. Wesley for England. We sailed about ten in the morning, and in the afternoon came to an anchor.

Monday 23, we had a vehement squall of wind, thunder, and lightning, between the Welsh Sands and the rocky shore of Lundy. We cried to the Lord in our trouble, and he delivered us out of our distress.

Tuesday 24, the wind was contrary. It blew a storm. The seas ran mountain high. We were tossed in a narrow channel, full of shoals, rocks, and sands. We prayed for help; our God heard, and brought us safe to Pill.

The next day I came to Bristol, where I spent a few days with pleasure, and then set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I visited the societies in my way, and they refreshed me in the love of Jesus. I spent a few weeks at and about Newcastle. My dear friends were glad to see me. We rejoiced together. I then set out for Whitehaven, where I had a good season. The Lord crowned my weak labours with success. About the latter end of the year I left Whitehaven, rode to Cockermouth, then to Penrith, and the next day came to Hindley-Hill. I took a fever in my journey, but rode on to Newlands, where I took my bed. My dear wife met me with joy and grief. She soon caught the disorder, and we continued sick for many weeks. We lodged with Mr. George Hunter, a friendly man. God richly provided all things for us. He blessed us in our sickness, and restored us to health. Praised be his dear name for ever!

In the spring, 1751, I set out for Bristol. I met with honest John Nelson at Leeds. We rode on together with some other preachers. We spoke freely to all that Providence put in our way, and God blessed our labours. We rode through heavy rains and rapid floods; but the Lord preserved both man and beast, and brought us to our journey's end in peace.

Monday, March 11, our conference began at Bristol.

The more we conversed, the more our love increased to God and one another. We kept to our first doctrines, and were of one heart and one mind.

I then returned to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, visiting the brethren in my way. I preached every evening at seven, and every morning at five o'clock, and often at noon day ; the common work of a Methodist preacher.

Monday, April 22, I set out with Mr. Wesley for Scotland. We rode to Alnwick. Our friends received us with joy. We praised God together.

Wednesday, 23d, we rode to Berwick. Mr. Wesley preached at a young man's funeral who had been cut off suddenly. It was a solemn time. Many heard for eternity.

Thursday, the 24th, we rode to Old Camus, through a Scotch mist. We rode past Preston Field, saw the place of battle, and Col. Gardiner's house. Here that good man, and brave soldier, fought and died for his king and country. We then rode on to Musselborough, where Mr. Wesley preached in a large school, to a company of wise men so called.

Friday 26, we rode back to Berwick. I left Mr. Wesley, and the week following returned to Musselborough, where I spent a few days. I preached night and morning to a large congregation, who heard with great attention. This was the beginning of a good work in Scotland. Some years after I preached at Edinburgh, Dunbar, Leith, Dundee, and Aberdeen. God blessed his word, and raised up witnesses to testify that he had sent us to the North Britons also.

In 1752 I set out with my wife for Whitehaven, where I spent a few days with pleasure and profit to myself and others. We then embarked for Ireland, and after a tedious voyage landed at Dublin. I spent a few weeks in that city, and then rode to Cork, where I spent the winter with joy and sorrow. We had warm work in that city for a long time : but the word of the Lord prevailed, and silenced the enemy.

In the spring I returned to Dublin, and met my wife and friends, who had just escaped the fire of a very hot persecution. This year I had many blessings and crosses, both by sea and land.

I'll praise my God with every breath,
O! let me die to see thy day!
Now snatch me from this life of death,
O! come, my Saviour, come away!

In the year 1753 I left Dublin, and embarked for England. We landed at Whitehaven. I first visited the Dales, then rode to Newcastle, and the Lord was with us of a truth.

In the year 1754 I embarked at North Shields for London. May 22d our conference began. It was a time of love.

In June I embarked for Newcastle. I had a quick and pleasant passage. I preached to the ship's company, who heard the word with joy. I landed at Shields, and then came to the Orphan House at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where we praised God and the Lamb, with one heart and voice, for mercies we had received.

May 6, 1756, our conference began at Leeds. The first question was, whether we ought to separate from the Church of England. After many deep and serious conversations, we concluded that it was not expedient for many reasons. I then set out again for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As I was passing through Chapel-Town I got a dreadful fall from my horse. My foot was much hurt, but all my bones were preserved; glory be to God and the Lamb. I rode with much pain to Newcastle, but enjoyed great peace, and a calm resignation to the Divine will. This I believe was a gracious dispensation, and was sent to humble me, and prepare me for a greater trial.

August 15th my dear wife took a fever. She had great pain and heavy affliction for about ten days, together with many violent temptations. But she enjoyed perfect peace, and was fully resigned to the will of her heavenly Father. At last she triumphed over death, and without a doubt, a sigh, or a groan, breathed out her happy soul into the arms of her adorable Redeemer!

On the 28th Mr. Massiot preached her funeral sermon to a very large congregation of true mourners. The same evening she was interred among her ancestors, in Ryton church. She was an agreeable, affectionate wife, a constant friend, and a pious, humble Christian. She is now in paradise, and I am left to mourn.

O may our heart and mind
Continually ascend
That heaven of repose to find,
Where all our labours end;
Where all our grief is o'er,
Our sufferings and our pain;
Who meet on that eternal shore
Shall never part again.

In July, 1756, I set out for Bristol. Our conference began August 26th. It was a good season.

September 15th I once more embarked for Ireland, with Mr. Murlin, Olivers, Gilbert, and Massiot: on the 19th we were within sight of land, and being well satisfied with a tedious and dangerous passage, we left the ship, and got into a fishing boat, and after rowing very hard for some hours, landed at Robertson's Cove, about twenty miles from Cork. We were poor strangers now in a strange land, and among a people of a strange language! There was not one inn or private house in the little village that could give us a night's lodging. It was a gloomy time. The day was gone, and we stood looking one at another like a company of poor prisoners. In these circumstances God sent us an honest farmer, who was a papist, and he took us home to his house in the country, and showed us great kindness. We lodged that night in the midst of our enemies; but the Lord suffered no man to hurt us. The next morning our kind host provided us horses, and sent a servant to conduct us safe to Cork. Here we met with a kind reception. Our friends rejoiced with us, and praised God for all our deliverances. I lodged with old Mr. Massiot, who kept a house too well provided for pilgrims. I spent a few days in that city, preaching night and morning, and visited the brethren from house to house. I hope good was done. I then set out for Dublin, where I spent my winter with pleasure and profit.

The spring following I returned to Cork, where I spent about two months. I found much satisfaction, but not without temptations. I met with reproaches and many cruel mockings, but found that Spirit resting upon me which gave me victory over reproach and shame. I then rode to Limerick, where I spent a few weeks. I met with some severe trials in that city; but God de-

livered me. I then set out for Dublin. I found my body and mind very weak, yet not without many kind visits from my blessed Lord.

In autumn I took a sore fever. Doctor Ratty, that venerable and wise physician, attended me faithfully, without fee or reward. He thought my labours under the sun were ended. I bid farewell to the world. I was kept in perfect peace, patient and resigned to the will of my heavenly Father. I had comfortable and clear views of paradise, and a world of happy spirits. When to all appearance I was just on the brink of eternity, I fell into a sweet rest and dreamed I was dead, and saw all things prepared for my funeral, and that my spirit was with Christ, in a state of unspeakable happiness; but was sent back again to call a few more sinners to repentance. I then awoke, my fever was gone, and from that moment I began to recover. My strength of body soon returned, and the Lord sent me forth with a fresh commission.

I laboured in Ireland till July, 1758, and then embarked for England, with Mr. Johnson, Greenwood, and Gilberts. We had a fine gale, and soon landed at Parkgate. I then rode to Bristol. Our conference began Aug. 10. It was a good season. God crowned our meeting with love and unanimity. The latter end of September I arrived once more at the Orphan House without Pilgrim-street Gate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. My good old friends were glad to see me, and received me as one raised from the dead.

In the latter end of this year I had some thoughts of changing my life again. I prayed for Divine direction, and took the advice of some of my dear friends. One who loved me, and wished me well, recommended to me an agreeable person of a fair character, and on April 17, 1759, we were married at St. Andrew's, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. God made his face shine upon us, and blessed us, and amply rewarded me for all my days of mourning. He doubly restored to me all spiritual and temporal blessings. This was a day of prosperity, therefore I thought it a day of great danger.

I was now favoured with an agreeable, loving companion, a good house, a pleasant situation, and all things to make life easy and comfortable. I must confess I found a desire to settle, but not to leave my blessed Master's

work. I began a little business, and had now a fair opportunity to step into the world: but my gracious Lord would not suffer me. He showed me that his good work would bring me far more gain in the end than all the shops in Newcastle. So I set out for the north, and preached at Placey, Morpeth, Alnwick, Berwick, Dundee, Musselborough, Leith, New and Old Aberdeen, Peterhead, and then returned to Newcastle the same way. I then set out for the London conference, visited Canterbury and Dover, returned to London, and then rode back to Newcastle. In all these journeys I found the Lord was with me, and gave his word success.

In the year 1760, I again visited Scotland. The work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Sinners were converted, mourners comforted, and the saints built up in their most holy faith. We had now a fair prospect of a great harvest in North-Britain, till men of corrupt minds stirred up the spirit of vain controversy; we then spent our time and strength about the meaning of words, instead of promoting the fear and love of God. My soul was troubled, and my spirit grieved within me, to see so many precious souls turned out of the way of holiness and happiness, by noisy disputes and foolish jangling. These men will blush in the last day who have done this great evil. Let me live with men of peace, who love God and the brethren, and enjoy the life of religion in their own souls.

April 28, 1761, Mr. Wesley came to Edinburgh, and the Lord gave his word success. Sinners heard with attention and the saints rejoiced in God their Saviour.

I visited Dundee and Aberdeen, returned to Edinburgh, and from thence to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where God blessed his own word. I then set out with Mr. Wesley and several of the brethren for Durham. Mr. Wesley preached in a green field, by the riverside, to a very large auditory. One poor man was favoured with a stone, and lost a little blood; but in the general they behaved tolerably well. I preached in the evening, in the same field, to a large congregation. A gentleman, so called, employed a base man to strip himself naked, and swim through the river to disturb the hearers; but a good woman soon hissed him off the stage, so he was glad to return by the

way he came, with much disgrace. Mr. John Greenwood informed me afterward, that the very gentleman who encouraged the poor wretch above mentioned, was some time after found drowned in the same river. O God! thy judgments are unsearchable, and thy ways past finding out!

In August I left Newcastle, and set out with my wife for London. It was a disagreeable journey, but God blessed and preserved us from all evil. Sept. 1, our conference began. On the 22d, King George the Third was crowned. Royalty was conspicuously displayed and the glory of this present world set forth in all its splendour. But kings must die, and then all their glory will vanish away. Thence we set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I spent my winter.

The latter end of July, 1762, we left Newcastle and set out for Leeds. Aug. 9, our conference began. I was stationed in that circuit. In July, 1763, I set out for London. Our conference began and ended in love. I then set out for Scotland. I spent my winter in Edinburgh, Dunbar, and Berwick. We lived in a little dark room at Edinburgh, encompassed round with old black walls, disagreeable enough: but we had a good season; many poor sinners were converted to God. We saw the fruits of our labours and rejoiced. My dear Edinburgh friends were very kind, especially Lady Gardiner, that good old saint, who is now with Jesus in paradise. Praise God for all his mercies!

In the year 1764, I continued labouring in Scotland. On June 1, I set out with Mr. Wesley and my wife for Aberdeen. We had a pleasant and profitable journey. This summer we laid the foundation of our Octagon at Aberdeen. The Lord gave me success. Many precious souls were awakened, and added to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are enrolled in heaven.

November 13, we set out for Edinburgh, and rode to Dundee. The 15th we rode to Kinghorn, and the next morning crossed the Frith, and took the stage to Edinburgh. Our friends received us with joy, and we praised God together.

In the year 1765, we laid the foundation of our Octa-

gon at Edinburgh. I met with much opposition and many discouragements, but the Lord was on my side, and helped me. I collected all I could, gave all I could spare, and borrowed above three hundred pounds to carry on and complete that building. I preached on the foundation one Sabbath day to a large congregation. The power of the Lord was present to heal, and many rejoiced to see that day. I preached every Lord's day on the Calton Hill, a large Golgotha, a place of a skull! By preaching so often in the cold air, to very large auditories, with other difficulties and hard labours, I laid the foundation of a very dangerous disorder in my bowels, which baffled all the skill of physicians and the virtue of medicine, for more than three years. But I could say,

Let sickness blast, and death devour,
If Heav'n will recompense our pains;
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
Since firm the word of God remains.

In July I set out for England. I spent a few days at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and then rode to Manchester. Our conference began the 20th of August, and ended the 23d. God refreshed us. I visited the brethren, and then set out for the north.

In October Mr. Alexander Coats died at the Orphan House, in perfect peace. I saw him fall asleep in the arms of our adorable Saviour, without a doubt. Farewell, my brother, for a season! but we shall meet again to part no more.

In the year 1766 I laboured in Newcastle circuit, but was very much indisposed. I was just worn out. My bodily strength failed. I was on the verge of eternity. But, blessed be God, I enjoyed great tranquillity of mind and very good spirits.

Accepting my pain,
I no longer complain,
But wait till at last I the haven obtain:
Till the storms are all o'er,
And afflicted no more,
On a plank of the ship I escape to the shore.

February 20th, that old saint, Henry Jackson, died full of love, being ninety-nine years and five months old. Let me die his death.

August 12, our conference began at Leeds. We enjoyed a solemn sense of the presence of God. We met and parted in love. I then rode to Newcastle, and spent a few months in that circuit. My disorder continued, but I could say, "When I am weak, then I am strong."

In July, 1767, I set out for London. God was with me, and gave me will and power to preach his word. August 18, our conference began. Dear Mr. Whitefield and honest Howell Harris attended. All was love; all was harmony: it was a pentecost indeed!

In the beginning of September, 1768, I left Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and set out with my wife for Birstal, in Yorkshire. The Lord brought us to our journey's end in peace. We met with a hearty welcome. Our friends rejoiced with us, and we praised God together.

On Tuesday, August 1, 1769, our conference began at Leeds. The Spirit of God rested upon us, and made us of one mind and judgment.

In the latter end of July, 1770, I rode to London. Our conference began August 7th. The Lord presided over us, and made it a time of love. I then set out for Birstal, where I had laboured two years with great satisfaction, and I hope with some success.

August 26th I took my leave of my dear Birstal friends, and rode with my wife to Bradforth, in Yorkshire. We met with a loving reception. I laboured this year with much comfort. I hope good was done.

In the year 1771 the Calvinists proclaimed open war against the Remonstrants. In August several of them met at our conference in Bristol: but their strength failed. They could do nothing: for truth is great, and will prevail. The two following years I laboured in Newcastle circuit, among my dear friends and countrymen, whom I love for the truth's sake. Great things hath the Lord done in that part of his vineyard.

In the year 1774 I was appointed at the Bristol conference for Liverpool circuit. I took leave of my Newcastle friends with much reluctance, and set out with my wife for Lancashire. September 26th we reached Bolton, in the Moors, where we met with a friendly reception. We lodged with honest George Eskrik. The presence of the Lord dwelt with us, and we enjoyed great peace.

In the year 1775 I removed to Liverpool, where I spent a few months with pleasure and profit: I found much love both to the place and people. They bore with my bodily weakness, and refreshed me in the Lord.

In July, 1776, I left Bolton, and set out for London. Our conference began the first Tuesday in August. The shout of a king was in the midst of us, and we praised God together for all that he had done. I spent a few days in that great city: preached the word, visited a few dear Christian friends, and then set out for Manchester.

November 7th I set out once more for Ireland. The 8th I reached Conway; the 9th Holy-Head: the 10th I embarked, and, after a dangerous passage, landed that evening in Dublin. I preached every evening at Wood-street, to a large auditory. God blessed his word, and gave me success. I visited a few poor backsliders, who were glad to see the face of an old friend. May God restore them for Christ's sake! Monday the 24th I embarked for England—25th, landed at the Head, and took the stage to Conway—26th, I came to Chester, and the 28th to Manchester; where my wife and friends received me with great joy. We praised God for trials and blessings.

In the latter end of July, 1777, I set out for Bristol. I visited the principal societies in my way, and God gave me strength of body and peace of mind. Our conference began the first Tuesday in August. We had a good season. Love to God and man crowned our meeting. I then rode to Manchester, and spent a few days with my old friends. I published the word of salvation in Salford, on the Sabbath day, to a large congregation. Some of our mistaken Churchmen presented the fire engine: but their strength failed; they could do nothing. This vain attempt seemed to be the last effort of a conquered enemy. I then set out for Bradforth, in Yorkshire, where I spent an agreeable year with Mr. Benson and my dear friends. I hope our weak labours were made a blessing to many.

In the year 1778 our conference began at Leeds, the first Tuesday in August. I was stationed another year with Mr. Murlin and Johnson, in Bradforth circuit. We laboured together in love. God was with us, and gave us success.

In the year 1779 I was appointed at our London con-

ference for Coln circuit, in Lancashire. August 25th, I took my leave of our dear friends at Bradforth, and set out with my wife for Coln. I met with many agreeable, and some disagreeable things. The grand enemy had wounded many, who, I hope, are now healed again. We have had a severe winter, many crosses and trials, and many blessings. The Lord hath owned our weak labours, and given us a little success. The last time I visited the classes in this circuit, we added thirty-eight to our number, twenty-three to the Church of the living God, who had found remission of sins through the blood of our adorable Saviour. Nine have died in peace, and are now with the spirits of just men made perfect, in the paradise of God.

I can say but little about the controversy between the Calvinian brethren and the Arminians. I believe Christ tasted death for every man, but I do not love contention: I am no disputant; I therefore leave polemical divinity to men of learning, abilities, and experience. I can only say, I have been greatly humbled for my sin. I know in whom I have believed. I know God is love. I know it by experience. He hath loved me, and given his Son for me. I have peace with God, through faith in the blood of Christ. I am at peace with all the saints; with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I desire to follow after peace with all men. I hate sin, and by the grace of God I overcome it. I love holiness, the whole mind that was in Christ, and I pursue it. By all means I follow on, if I may apprehend that for which I was also apprehended of Christ Jesus. I aim at, wish, and pray for all that grace, glory, and immortality, promised by the Father, and procured by the Son of his love. This I call Bible religion, genuine Christianity, and this religion I call mine. This I desire to recommend to all men, by preaching his word in the pulpit, in the house, and in the way; in season and out of season, according to my ability. Without this religion, all names, notions, and forms, among all sects and parties, are but mere parade and idle show. Without repentance, without faith in the blood of Christ, without holiness of heart and life, without love to God and man, all is nothing. Let all men consider this well, and pray for, and seek after this

one thing needful, that they may be saved from sin in this life, and from hell in the great day of the Lord Jesus !

MR. JOHN OLIVER.

TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I was born at Stockport, in Cheshire, in the year 1732. My father was fond of me to excess. I went to school till I was thirteen, and there contracted such acquaintance as led me into every kind of folly, dancing, plays, races, cock-fighting, and the like ; which laid a foundation for all the vices incident to youth. Indeed, the Spirit of God was daily striving with me ; but my companions made all his strivings ineffectual. My father designed to give me a liberal education, and accordingly put me to the grammar school ; but, being reduced in the world, he soon took me from school into the shop, where I remained some years.

The Methodists then coming to Stockport, I was greatly prejudiced against them ; and, knowing one of them, called upon him, and laboured much to convince him they were of a bad religion, and were enemies to the Church. But he soon convinced me that I had no religion at all : so I came near him no more. But I began to feel myself a sinner, and resolved to drop all my acquaintance and diversions, and to keep close to the Church, and repeat the prayers and collects every day. Accordingly I dropped them at once, notwithstanding all the arguments and expostulations of my companions. I read, prayed, fasted, went to church, and seemed more and more resolved, till, after a few months, several young men of my acquaintance came from Manchester, on the Lord's day, to an inn just opposite to our house, and sent over for me. My father pressing me to go, I went ; only resolving not to stay long. But I soon forgot this, and all my good resolutions. When I came home at night, I was in an agony. I did not dare to pray. My conscience stared me in the face, and the terror I felt was inconceivable.

It was soon spread abroad that I was melancholy. A

neighbour, who was a hearer of the Methodists, sent me word there was to be preaching that night. My father declared, "if I went he would knock my brains out, though he should be hanged for it." However, I stole away. The preacher was John Appleton, who invited *all that were weary and heavy laden to come to Jesus*. It was balm to my soul. I drank it in with all my heart, and began to seek God as I had not done before. Till now I thought of saving myself. My cry now was, "Lord, save, or I perish." Yet I knew not how to go on, till one sent me word there was a person at her house who would be glad to see me. It was Miss Simpson. She told me the manner of her conversion to God. She sung a hymn, and went to prayer. I was all in a flame to know these things for myself. As soon as I got home I went to prayer, and pleaded the merits of Christ. Suddenly, I thought I heard a clear voice, saying, "Son, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven." I cried out, "Lord, if this be from thy Spirit, let the words be applied with power." Instantly I heard a second time, "Son, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee." In that instant all my load was gone, and I felt such a change as cannot be expressed. I loved God: I loved all mankind. I could not tell whether I was in the body or out of it. Prayer was turned into wonder, love, and praise.

In this happy state I remained for several months, feeling nothing in my heart but love. Yet I wanted some agreeable companions; and I thought over all the people I knew. I could not recollect any of our Church that were such as I wanted: no, nor any among the Dissenters or Quakers. The last people I thought of were the Methodists: I found my soul united to them: I took an opportunity of asking one of them, Robert Anderson, "what were the terms of admission among them." He told me, "These:" putting the rules of the society into my hands, and desiring me to read and consider them. Having done this, I told him there was one rule which I was afraid I could not keep: "meeting every week:" but I would meet as often as I could. So I joined the society in the year 1748.

I was now tried in a manner I had not been before. My father was a man of a violent temper; and, as much

as he loved me, his anger quickly overcame his natural affection. He sent to all the Methodists, threatening what he would do if any of them dared to receive me into their houses. Several gentlemen of the town advised him to proceed to more severe methods. He did so, frequently breaking sticks, and sometimes chairs upon me. When all this did not move me, he tried another way, charging me with disobedience, and telling me I had broken his heart, and would bring down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Several clergymen then called upon me, and strove to show me the Methodists were in the wrong. One of them was Mr. Dale, lately my master, who called me his child, prayed for me, wept over me, and conjured me, if I loved my own soul, not to go near those people any more. My father promised, before Mr. Dale, I should go to Church prayers every day, and have every indulgence I could wish, "provided I would come no more near those d—n—d villains." I told him I would do every thing in my power, as a child to a parent, to oblige him; but this was a thing that affected my conscience, which therefore I could not give up.

Our society was now much united together, and did indeed love as brethren. Some of them had just begun to meet in band, and invited me to meet with them.—Here, one of them speaking of the wickedness of the heart, I was greatly surprised; telling them I felt no such things; my heart being kept in peace and love all the day. But it was not a week before I felt the swelling of pride, and the storms of anger and self-will: so when I met again I could speak the same language with them. We sympathized with each other, prayed for each other, and believed God was both able and willing to purify our hearts from all sin.

Not long after, having given way to temptation, and grieved the Holy Spirit of God, all his comforts were withdrawn in a moment: my soul was all over darkness: I could no longer see Him that is invisible: I could not feel his influence on my heart: I sought him, but could not find him. I endeavoured to pray, but the heavens seemed like brass. At the same time such a weight came upon me as if I was instantly to be pressed to death. I sunk into black despair, concluding that God had for-

gotten to be gracious. My friends strove to lift up my hands; but it yielded me no relief. I found no gleam of light, no trace of hope, no token of any kind for good. The devil improved this hour of darkness, telling me I was sure to be damned; for I was forsaken of God, and a mere dead weight upon his people. Thus I passed over several days and nights. Sleep departed from me; and I scarcely ate any thing, till I was reduced to a mere skeleton.

One day, being able to bear no longer, I rose very early in the morning, and went to Mr. Cheetham's, at Adswold. The family were all very tender over me, and, as Mr. Jaco was to preach in the evening, desired me to stay. They told him my case, and he strongly encouraged me to hope in the Lord.

My father missing me, and not knowing what was become of me, was almost distracted. He sent persons around about in every road, but could learn nothing, till Mr. Cheetham sent a messenger to Stockport, to desire he would come over. He came, but I was afraid of going home, till he promised he would use no severity. As soon as we came home he sent for Dr. H—t, an utter stranger to all religion. In proof whereof he immediately took a large quantity of blood from me, blistered me on the head, back, and feet, and loaded me with medicines. For near two months I was under his care: all that time none of my friends were suffered to see me. The clergymen, Messrs. Richmond, Knowles, and Dale, visited me in their turns, and used every argument to induce me to think of the Methodists no more.

In the meantime prayer was made for me continually in the societies: and a day was set apart for fasting and humiliation. I believe it was in consequence of this that I was raised up. The doctor and ministers now judged I might go out. My design was first to visit the church; but, as I was going, an old acquaintance came to my mind, who lived three miles off. I had a strong desire to see him; and, turning about, went straight to his house. He caught me in his arms, and said, "My dear child, I am glad to see you. I always believed God would deliver you. But where will you go now?" I saw I should not be permitted to serve God

at home. After consulting together, we agreed it would be best for me to spend a little time at Manchester : so the next day I went thither. As I was going a gentleman met me, who told my father. I was hearing Mr. Haughton in the evening, when my mother, having come from Stockport on purpose, would not come in, but stood at the door, and sent a person to tell me one desired to speak with me. When I came, she said, " Your father is dying, and wants to see you before he dies." Being exceedingly struck, I went with her. She took me to an acquaintance, Mr. Hibbert's, in Dean's Gate. It being late, she said she must stay in town all night, and go off early in the morning. But they knew not what to do with me ; being afraid the Methodists would come and take me away. At length they shut me up in a room with strong doors, and a person to guard me all night. In the morning I was guarded home, where I found my father as well as usual. He did every thing he could to extort a promise that I would leave the Methodists. But, not prevailing, he gave the matter up, and from that time I gained my freedom.

The week following I met with my brethren again. And, O the thankfulness that was expressed on every side ! I found now every means was to my soul what the river Jordan was to Naaman. My strength came again, my light, my life, my God ; and I was filled with all joy and peace in believing. Indeed I could not see, at first, why God had permitted me to pass through those deep waters. But I now see it was that I might sympathize with other afflicted souls from heart-felt experience.

Soon after it was strongly impressed on my mind that God had called me to some more public work. I was then a leader, and had occasionally exhorted, but with fear and trembling. For some time I resisted the thought, fearing it was a device of the devil : I earnestly sought the Lord by fasting and prayer : I poured out my supplication against it. But the more I strove and prayed, the more the thought was pressed upon my mind. Mr. Bennet was then in connection with you, sir. We were intimate, and loved each other dearly. I told him all that was in my heart. He asked, " What can induce you to undertake such a work as this ?" I answered,

"It can be no view of gain; for I am getting money every year, and want nothing. It is not pride: I want no praise of men. It is a tender regard for my fellow creatures. I have had much forgiven, and I now love much. And if I could be an instrument of saving but one soul, it would make amends for the labour of all my life: and I think I am called of God thereto." He said, "Then go on in God's name."

On December 26th, in the year 1751, Mr. Bennet wrote me a letter, wherein he desired me to meet him at Manchester, and go a round with him. I met him there, and we rode together to Bolton, where notice had been given of his preaching. When the hour was come, he absolutely refused to preach; but, after Mr. Mitchell had given an exhortation, got up on one of the forms, and said, "I have no longer any connection with Mr. Wesley. He denies the perseverance of the saints, and asserts sinless perfection. Now I desire that all of you who are of my mind will follow me." They did so; for, out of a hundred and twenty-seven, only nineteen remained.

He went on till he came to Stockport; where, after preaching, he met the society, and told them what he had done at Bolton, and added, "Now you must take either me or Mr. Wesley." They all joined him but one, Molly Williamson. He promised to preach to them every fortnight; but, within a year, utterly forsook them, and preached at Stockport no more.

A few days after I called on Molly Williamson, and found her exceedingly afflicted; Mr. Bennet having taken away her sister and her father. She asked, "What can we do?" I said, "There is a family at Adswood, that has lately come to hear, and has neither joined Mr. Bennet nor Mr. Wesley: go over and propose a weekly meeting at their house." They willingly accepted of the proposal. We exhorted them every Lord's day, and met as a class every Wednesday evening. The Lord owned and blessed us: we had love and peace; only we wanted the preachers in connection with you. We prayed for them: soon after you came yourself, preached at noon, and promised to send us preachers. You did so: they came once a month, and we thought ourselves highly favoured of the Lord.

I still wanted the preachers to come again to Stockport : and Mr. Allwood being in the circuit, I asked him whether he would preach if I could procure a place.— He said he would. I spoke to Robert Anderton, who kept the old preaching house, and he consented to his preaching there. Soon after we hired a house, and had regular preaching therein : and God then revived and carried on his work in spite of all opposition.

In the year 1759 James Wild came into the Manchester circuit. He was a blessing to many, and to me in particular, being exceeding tender over me ; and I believe it was in consequence of what he spoke concerning me at the conference, that soon after I received a letter from you, sir, wherein you told me that I was accepted on trial, as a travelling preacher, and was appointed to labour in the Sheffield circuit. The news seemed to me like a death warrant. I knew not what to do. I thought, “ My abilities are by no means sufficient for the work : and if I attempt it, I shall only expose myself, and bring a discredit upon the Gospel.” But, on the other hand, I thought, “ If I do not go, I shall grieve Mr. Wesley, and fail in my duty.” After much reasoning I came to this conclusion, I will go and make a trial ; if the Lord owns me, and the people receive me, so long as this is the case, I will stay with them : if they do not receive me, or if I see no fruit of my labour, I will return to my business.

Having prepared all things, and settled my business in such a manner that I could return to it with credit, I was commended by the brethren to the grace of God, and set out with much fear, hardly expecting to stay three months in the circuit.

I thought, certainly they will despise my youth : but it was far otherwise. They bore with all my weaknesses, and I was kindly received and tenderly treated on every side. I was particularly indebted to two faithful friends, Mrs. G., of Rotherham, and E. B., of Woodseats. They were as nursing mothers to me on all occasions. Whenever my mind was burdened I imparted to them all my trials, and they lifted up my hands.

The circuit being long, the preachers seldom saw each other but on the quarter day. But the people loved us,

and we loved one another : so that I got the year through much better than I expected. And I did not run in vain : I did see in various places a little fruit of my labour.— But I was not satisfied with this : I wanted all the people to be converted to God. And fearing I took up the place of some more useful preacher than I was, or ever should be, at the close of the year I wrote to you, sir, desiring I might go home. You wrote to me, “ You have set your hand to the Gospel plough, therefore never look back. I would have you come up to London this winter. Here is every thing to make the man of God perfect.” I was then in the Haworth circuit with good Mr. Grimshaw, who showed me great kindness. He did not let me go without much reluctance. While I was upon the road I found my heart thoroughly engaged in the work of God, and determined to give up all : yet, when I came within sight of London, my spirits began to sink, having been always of a fearful temper, which, indeed, continues to this day. And when I came into the great city, every thing was strange to me. All the people were strangers to me, and I to them ; but we soon knew one another. The longer I stayed, the better I liked every thing around about me. I found your words true : “ Here is every thing to make the man of God perfect.”

Soon after I received a letter from Thomas Mitchell, at Norwich, earnestly pressing me to come and help him. Having consulted with my brethren, I went : but as soon as I came, T. Mitchell went away ; so I was left alone for above two months, having care enough upon my hands, more than ever I had had before, beside the preaching sixteen or seventeen times a week. Being almost worn out, I wrote to you, sir, desiring you would send me some assistance. In the meantime, my situation was made a blessing to me, causing me to give myself much to prayer.

Just at this time a good providence sent to Norwich that saint of God, Jane Cooper. I have great reason to praise God on her account. She was a general blessing to the people. By her conversation and prayer, many both of the young beginners and old standers, were stirred up : many found remission of sins, and many were renewed in love ; so that we had gracious showers

on every side. She advised me to declare the whole counsel of God. "Enforce," said she, "a present and full salvation. Many will hate you for so doing, but God will love you: and many will believe, and feel the force of his word. Therefore, my brother, be strong, be bold!" Her name is precious to me to this day.

After her, came another of like spirit, Paul Greenwood: at the sight of whom my spirit revived, I think, as much as Jacob's did when he saw Joseph's wagons. We laboured together in much love, and not without success. He was a man of a truly excellent temper, and exemplary behaviour. He was constantly serious, but not sad: he was always cheerful, but not light. And the people drank into the same spirit, so that the year passed very agreeably.

In the year 1761, my scrofulous disorder appeared, and grew more and more troublesome. I applied to an eminent surgeon, but was little better. In spring, 1762, I went to Canterbury: here I had the happiness of conversing with Mr. Charles Perronet, a man of much pain and sorrow, but dead to all things here below, and deeply devoted to God. By him I profited much. He wanted to be all spirit: so did I. And we met once a week with a few friends who were like minded. I bless God that ever I saw them.

This summer there was a great pouring out of the Spirit in London, and many were athirst for the whole Christian salvation: so was I. I loved the very name of it. I loved to hear it spoken of. I loved all the people that were in pursuit of it, and was never so happy as in their company and conversation. This was before those extravagances crept in. My soul was sweetly united to them. I caught their spirit, and felt such zeal for preaching a present and full salvation, that wherever I was, I preached it to all believers in the best manner I could. This soon had its use, both upon the people and upon my own soul. I was convinced more deeply than ever of inbred sin, and of the promise of God to save me from it. And never did man at a bar plead harder for life, than I pleaded with God for this salvation.

Mr. Perk, of Lincoln's Inn, then a sober, rational Christian, desired me one day to call and dine with him

I there unexpectedly met with Messrs. Colley, Jay, Coughlan, Bell, Owen, and some others. When dinner was over, one said "Our Lord has promised, Whatsoever two or three of you shall agree to ask in my name, I will do it. We agree now." A hymn was sung. It seemed as if the glory of the Lord filled the place. We went to prayer. A general cry arose, but without any confusion. The Lord was moved by our instant prayer, and we had the petition we asked of him. I was baptized as with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and felt that "perfect love casteth out fear." Great was our fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. After an hour spent in supplication and thanksgiving, we sung from the ground of our hearts,—

Hang our new-born souls on thee,
Kept from all idolatry;
Nothing want, beneath, above !
Happy, happy in thy love.

If ever I had access to the throne of grace, it was on this memorable day. Our Lord was inexpressibly near : it seemed we might ask and have whatever we wanted. And we were exceedingly drawn out in prayer for you, your sons in the Gospel, and the people under your care, feeling the communion of saints, both on earth below and in heaven above. But in all this there was nothing wild ; but all calmness, meekness, love, and peace.—From this time I went forth in the power and spirit of love : I felt nothing but love, and desired nothing but more love. And so I continued, without any intermission, all the time I remained in London.

I could now understand that objection commonly made against those who long to be all devoted to God, " That they do not love to converse with other people, with many but those of their own sort." How little spiritual conversation is to be found among other people ! Among any that are not "going on to perfection !" Generally the tenor of their conversation is dry, lifeless, and useless. But those who are earnestly going on, hardly care to talk of any thing else. And whatever conversation has no savour of this is dull and insipid to them. From that day to this, I have not lost my sight of, nor my affection for, Christian perfection. But I have been

pressed down by the exercises of every kind which I have passed through since that time. I fear some of them were purposely laid in my way by those who were no friends to this doctrine, and who were not greatly pleased with me for enforcing it in every place. But I willingly leave this and all my affairs to the disposal of a wise and gracious providence.

The next year I was at Bristol, with Mr. Oddie, and was happy both with him and with the people. My heart was given up: I was all athirst for God, and wanted every thought to be holiness to the Lord. Jesus was the first beauty to my soul; he reigned alone in my heart. I was entirely and constantly happy in God: he was my all in all.

In 1764, I was again stationed in London. My disorder now increasing much, I was advised to apply, without loss of time, to Mr. Morley, a gentleman of Halsted, in Essex. I went down without delay. He behaved like a gentleman and a Christian. He first prayed that God would bless his endeavours; and after inquiring minutely into my case, told me my whole mass of blood was corrupted. He therefore advised me to an entire milk diet; to take a quart of milk every day, with some white bread, and two table spoonfuls of clarified honey. In six months my whole habit of body was changed, nor have I had any thing of my disorder since.

The next year I spent with Mr. Oddie, in the Manchester circuit. We had some severe trials; but, going on hand in hand, we were more than conquerors. Where preachers are united, nothing can hurt them: where they are not, nothing can help them.

The year following I was appointed for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I found a most agreeable family. And I never met with a people who valued the preachers like those in this circuit. Their spirit and their conduct, throughout the whole, was "courteous, pitiful, and kind." Afterward I spent two years in Leeds circuit, two in Bradforth, and two in Birstal circuit. Always when I go into a new round, I go with great heaviness: but, after awhile, I so cleave to the people that I know not how to leave them.

In the year 1773, I was removed to Chester circuit, where I continued two years. In the second year I was invited to Wrexham. The house being too small for the

congregation, I was desired to preach abroad, which I accordingly did, to about a thousand serious hearers. While I was speaking, a constable came with orders from a neighbouring justice to apprehend me. I desired him to stay till I had done my discourse, and I would go with him. He agreed so to do ; but the justice, impatient of delay, came himself, and seized me by the collar. I said, "Sir, here is no riot ; all is peaceable ; and I am a licensed preacher." Notwithstanding, he dragged me on till he saw the constable, and then charged him to carry me to Bridewell. As we were walking, I told the constable, "I will not go unless you have a written order." He went to the justice, and returned with the following order, which I have by me :—

"This is to order the constables of Wrexham, and Thomas Price in particular, safely to convey the body of — Oliver, a vagrant preacher, who hath unlawfully assembled a concourse of people in the School-yard, against the peace of our sovereign lord the king, to the house of correction in the town of Wrexham. And likewise to order the keeper of the said house to receive and safely keep the body of him, the said — Oliver, for farther examination, and that he may be dealt with according to law.

"Given under my hand and seal, this tenth day of June, 1774. THOS. BOYCOTT."

As I was walking with the constable toward Bridewell, there was such a concourse of people, that it was with difficulty we got through them. The house was soon filled with people of all ranks, who expressed all possible kindness. One gentleman said, "Sir, I will be bound with you for £500." • Another said, "You shall preach at my door, and let them disturb you that dare." I had now an opportunity of explaining to them the religion which we wished to propagate in every place. I then went to prayer, wherein I was greatly refreshed, and most of the people were deeply affected. Many would fain have stayed with me all night, but I would not suffer it. At nine in the morning I was ordered to appear before the justice, with whom I found the high sheriff and an attorney. He asked for my license, which I gave him : he

read it, and said it was good for nothing. I said, "Sir, it was never questioned before, and the questioning the validity of it now is a reflection upon the whole bench of justices, who gave it me in open court." The attorney then beginning to interrogate me, I said, "Sir, I am under no obligation to answer impertinent questions." He got up, went out, and I saw him no more. The justice then told me, unless I would promise to preach there no more, he would order me to be whipped out of the town. I answered, "Sir, I will make no such promise. I am an Englishman. I have violated none of the laws of my country, and therefore am liable to no punishment." After using a few more contemptuous words, he told me I might go about my business. So I took my leave of Mr. Boycott, rejoicing that I was counted worthy to suffer shame for my Master's sake.

The next year I laboured in Sheffield circuit, where was a great outpouring of the Spirit of God. And throughout the year there appeared to be a general moving among the people. In the succeeding years I was in Manchester, Liverpool, Macclesfield, and Birstal circuits. And I bless God, I never was in any circuit yet where I had not some seals of my mission. God has wrought wonderfully of late in Birstal circuit. He is blessing us on every side. Some hundreds have within this year been added to the societies. On the national fast day, the little society at Thong appointed a prayer meeting in the evening. The Spirit of grace and supplication was so poured out upon them, that they continued until morning. Several were in the greatest agony, lying upon the ground in cold sweats, one crying out, "Lord, help me;" another, "Save, or I perish." Before they parted eight were justified, and several renewed in love.

I would beg leave to observe, upon the whole, that having been near thirty years in the service of a good Master, I have great reason to be humble for having done so little for God, for my neighbour, and for myself. I might have exerted myself more in the cause of God, and have made greater improvement, both as a preacher and as a Christian. God be merciful to me a sinner.

I am, Rev. sir, your affectionate son in the Gospel,
JOHN OLIVER.

MR. ALEXANDER MATHER.

—
TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. SIR,—I was born at Brechin, in North Britain, in February, 1733, of reputable parents, who made it their business to bring me up in the fear of God. They instructed me early in the principles of religion and took particular care to keep me from evil company; so that when I grew up, I was an utter stranger to the vices common among men. And I took pleasure in reading good books, and learning our catechism by heart. When I was at the Latin school, it was the custom of our master, every Lord's day after the evening service, to hear what we could remember of the sermons, and pray with us. Under one of his prayers (when I was about ten years old) I was struck with strong convictions. And these never quite left me, but I always retained a desire to be a Christian.

Soon after this, out of a childish frolic, I went away with a party of the rebels. But I knew not what I did. I hereby exposed myself to many hardships and dangers. But the Lord delivered me out of all. Many mighty ones fell on Culloden heath, and in the way to Inverness, and indeed on every side: yet I was mercifully preserved. But when I came near my father's house, there was no entrance for me. And I knew not where to go, till my mother resolved to take me to a relations of her's near Perth.

We had a large river to cross, which was much swelled by the late rains. We were just got into the boat, when a gentleman on horseback came and begged us to stay and take him in, which we accordingly did. He seemed much fatigued. My mother desired me to hold his horse, which I did, twisting the bridle around my hand. When we were about the middle of the river, the horse took fright and leaped out of the boat, taking me and the oars, and both the boatmen with him: so that none were left in the boat, but my mother and the gentleman, without any means of helping themselves. The horse swam to

the opposite shore, dragging me with him : then turned back, and swam to the shore we had left. He then jumped out, pulling me just above the water ; but I there lost my hold and fell back into the river. It carried me down, rolling me over and over, till it brought me to the side of the boat, which was strangely got to the same shore. They caught hold of me and pulled me in.

Here I cannot but remark several providential incidents : 1. That both of the boatmen should get safe to that side of the water. 2. That when they were there, they should be able to get the boat, with my mother and the gentleman safe in it. 3. That the horse did not leave me on the opposite side, where, to all appearance, I must have perished. 4. That, notwithstanding the impetuosity of the stream, the horse should reach the land above the boat. Had it been below, I had probably been lost. I admire, above all, the exact time of every circumstance ! Had I been brought to the same side first, I could have had no help : had the boatmen reached the opposite side, they in the boat could have had none. And had any of us been carried but a little lower, we must inevitably have been swallowed up in a whirlpool. After having thrown up much water, I was so far recovered as to be able to take boat again. And having got safe over, we travelled twelve Scotch miles (eighteen English) before night. But we could not travel without much danger, as the country was full of parties, both horse and foot, who abused all the strangers they met with, and often took them prisoners. When we came near a town, we inquired of one we met, where we could have a quiet lodging ? She said "she could recommend us to no inn ; for they would inform the soldiers of us, who were very rude to all strangers, especially to women : but if we would put up with the house of a poor man, she knew one that she thought would receive us." So she conducted us to a little cottage, where we found the man engaged in family worship. When it was ended, he looked upon my mother and said, "Good wife, I have no place fit to entertain you, who appear to have a good home somewhere. Neither can I protect you, if the soldiers hear you are in my house. But if you please to sit by the fire, with a little straw for the lad to lie on, you are welcome. They then gave us

something to eat and drink, which we received with thankfulness to God. The good woman then laid me down on the straw, and sat by my mother till the morning; when, having been commended to God in prayer by our host, we went on our journey.

My mother's brother was a considerable farmer, in the Carse of Gowry, near Perth. Thither we got before sunset, and were kindly received, till my mother told him her design of leaving me there. But his wife opposed it much, fearing lest, if it was discovered, they should be ruined for harbouring me. However, my uncle seeing the distress my mother was in, overruled her, and said, "I should stay." And the next morning he sent a servant with my mother, who saw her safe home. I stayed the Sunday at my uncle's. But on Monday morning before sunrise he called me (his wife having prevailed) and told me, "You must go hence." So I set off with one to guide me across the mountains. He then left me to find my way as I could, to a place and a person I had never heard of before: but I had a line to the man: Providence brought me to the place; but the man was not at home. However, he came the next day, and received me kindly. Here I stayed till about midsummer, and then removed to a distant relation's, where I stayed till November. It was then judged that I might go home safely: but when I came, my father would not let me come into his house. Nay, he went and made information against me to the commanding officer: and I should have been sent to prison, had not a gentleman of the town interfered for me, and procured leave for me to lodge at my father's house. In the morning a file of musqueteers came to take me into custody, and brought me to the officer. After asking many questions, he told me, "You may go home." But when I came to the door, the soldiers not knowing his order, were going to carry me to prison: till he looked out of the window, and bade them let me go. However, my father would not put me to school any more, but kept me to his business, that of baking. I continued with my father till the beginning of May, 1751: when, being well acquainted with my business, I determined to go abroad. I set out with another young man, who was engaged in Perth. Here a place was

provided for me in a pious family, where I remained till after Christmas. Two persons then came from London, with one of whom I contracted an intimate acquaintance. One Lord's day she asked me to go with her to the Episcopal meeting. It affected me much, and from that time I attended it whenever I could. And I cannot but say it was of great use to my soul, and has proved so ever since.

About this time I formed a purpose of going to London, and having took leave of my relations, we set sail from Montrose about the middle of June, 1752. When I came to London I knew no one there: but the kind hand of God was over me. I found a brother of my father's, who, being of the same trade, took me to work with him till he procured me a place in a serious family at Billingsgate. But as I was a foreigner, my master was summoned to Guildhall, and obliged to put me away. In a little time I got me another place, near Whitechapel-Bars. And as I was strong and active, my master persuaded me to engage for a year certain. Afterward he did not use me well: till one day, being in a passion, he ordered me instantly to quit his house; which I immediately did.

In the year 1753, my present wife, who was born near where I was, and had lived several years with my parents in my infancy, heard I was in London, and resolved to see me. We had not seen one another for many years, and were both glad of the meeting: and as I was then out of place, we had opportunity of seeing each other frequently. On February 14th we were married. I had then forgot the resolutions I had often made of living wholly to God whenever I should marry: but he soon brought them back to my remembrance by laying affliction on my wife. I now began to be in good earnest for salvation: I bought up all opportunities for prayer. I resolved to break through all opposition, and to serve God with all my heart. But still it lay heavy upon my mind, that I had not performed my vow of praying with my wife. And my convictions increased day by day, till my appetite was gone, and my sleep departed from me: my bones were filled as with a sore disease, and my tears were my meat day and night. I now broke through and

prayed with my wife, and we never after left the practice. It was not long after this, that she knew God to be a pardoning God. And all that summer we continued praying and striving together, and steadily walking in all the ordinances of God. After living at Hampstead sometime, I removed to a place at St. Catharine's. While I was here I was one day going hastily along the street, and a loaded cart stood in it, which nearly filled it up. However, I went on, thinking I could get by : but just as I was going by it moved, caught my basket, crushed me up against the wall, and dragged me along till we came against a shop window, which gave way and released me. Every one that saw it supposed I should be crushed to death ; or at least my arms or legs would be broken. But I received no hurt at all, beside a little bruise on the back of my hand.

In September, 1753, I was hired to Mr. Merriot. Our meeting was not expected on either side : he had been inquiring the character of another, which he did not approve of : and I was inquiring for a master, when he came and asked me if I was out of place ? I answered, Yes. He asked me if I would keep good hours ? Which I promised to do. So we agreed, and I entered upon his service. Here I found what I had long desired, a family wherein was the worship of God. This stirred me up to be more earnest in seeking him : to be exact in praying by myself every morning, and with my wife every afternoon. And we continued seeking him with our whole heart, and shunning whatever we thought offensive to him. We used, likewise, every means of grace. I have sometimes gone to my knees when I was going to bed, and have continued in that position till two o'clock, when I was called to go to work. My wife had sometime since found a degree of peace with God. But I could find no peace, nor could I tell what hindered, unless it was the baking of pans, as they called it, on Sundays. I would gladly have refrained from this, but then I must have left my place, and I had no hope of finding another place which would not have been liable to the same inconvenience. However, I resolved, as soon as Christmas was over, to give up my place at all events. Meantime my flesh consumed away, like as a moth fretting a garment.

And my bones were ready to start through my skin ; for I had no rest day or night. The following Sunday my wife and I ventured, for the first time, to the holy communion ; and I found some comfort ; but the sense of my profaning the Sabbath soon took it away. I now resolved to delay no longer than the next day, being willing to suffer rather than sin. Accordingly, on Monday morning, as soon as my master came down stairs, I gave him warning : he did not then speak one word : but soon after he came into the shop and asked me, " If I had got another place ? " I answered, No. He said, " Why then would you leave this ? " I answered, " Because I dare not commit sin by breaking the Sabbath, as I have done." He used many arguments with me, but in vain. I told him, " I must abide by the word of God, whatever be the consequence : but I will not go away till you suit yourself with another man."

God now gave me much confidence, and I found much power to pray, that if it was not his will we should part, he would incline my master to give it up. And the same day he went with a neighbouring baker to all of the trade in Shoreditch and Bishop's-gate without ; proposing that they should all enter into an agreement to give it up at once. All but two agreed. He then advertised for a meeting of the master bakers upon the subject : but nothing could be concluded. Afterward I suppose he asked the advice of the brethren at the Foundry. After he had taken all these steps, more than I could reasonably expect, he told me, " I have done all I can, and now I hope you will be content." I sincerely thanked him for what he had done, but told him I could not stay any longer than till he had suited himself. But I continued in prayer. And on Sunday evening, after family worship, he stopped me and said, " I have done to-day what will please you : I have stayed at home and told all my customers I will no more bake on a Sunday." I told him, " If you have done this out of conscience toward God, be assured it will end well." And so it did. That very year his trade considerably increased. And he had a large augmentation of his fortune, so that he was enabled to relieve many that were in want, and also to lay up abundance for his children. May they herein tread in their father's steps.

He then asked me how I came to scruple baking on Sundays? And I told him simply how God had dealt with my soul. And I believe it was then he first felt that affection for me, which continued to his dying day. (From that time both he and my good mistress were particularly kind to me and mine. And when, some years after, my station in London placed me in some sense over them, there were none in the society that more fully submitted to every branch of discipline.) It was then he asked me to go with him to the Foundry, which I did at five the next morning. When I came back, I told my wife where I had been. It grieved her very much, as she believed all the idle reports she had heard; many of which she rehearsed, and added, "Now our peace is broken for ever." This stirred me up to be more earnest in prayer, but did not prevent my going every morning. On Sunday she was persuaded to go with me, though much afraid of my being drawn into some wrong way. John Nelson preached an alarming discourse, which I hoped would affect her much. But, on the contrary, she was much disgusted, saying, "He has shown me the way to hell; and not the way to get out of it. But I thank God, he has shown me that Jesus Christ is the way: and has brought me out of it too." However, she went again the next Sunday. Mr. Charles Wesley then preached, and described the whole process of the work of God in the soul. She followed him step by step, till he came to the abiding witness of adoption, and here he left her behind. She was now both pleased and profited, and we now went on hand in hand in the ways of God. But still I did not find the Spirit of adoption, though I sought it diligently, continuing instant in prayer, and attending the word every morning and evening. Indeed, this was not without difficulty; for I had no time for either but what I took from my sleep, which should have been from six to ten in the evening, and from half past four to six in the morning. I now slept little and ate little, and the grief of my soul drank up my spirits. But yet I could not believe, though I continued in prayer and supplication day and night, seeking God in sincerity of heart, and carefully departing from evil.

About this time my wife and I were permitted to stay

at the meeting of one of the classes. I was much pleased and refreshed : but she said, " They had all agreed what to say, in order to catch us." Such is the folly of prejudice ! It was soon after this, that you returned from the Bristol Hotwells, (being just recovered from your consumption,) namely on Easter Eve, 1754. The next day you preached at West-street, April the 14th : it was the first time I ever saw or heard you. Under that sermon God set my heart at liberty, removed my sins from me, as far as the east is from the west : which the very change of my countenance testified before my tongue could utter it. I had no great transport of joy ; but my load was gone, and I could praise God from the ground of my heart ; all my sorrow, and fear, and anguish of spirit being changed into a solid peace. But on Monday, in the afternoon, as I was going along, I began to think, " You fancy your sins are forgiven, but you are deceived." I had but a little time given way to these thoughts before I was quite miserable. And when I got home, my wife immediately asked, What is the matter with you ? I said, " Matter enough : I have deceived my own soul ; I wish I had my sorrow again." She strongly urged me not to reason, but believe ! to look unto Jesus, as giving himself for me. I was encouraged. I soon recovered my peace, which by the mercy of God I have not lost since. Soon after we both joined the society, and met in brother Good's class ; and this, among all the means of grace, was peculiarly useful to my soul.

About this time my eldest brother, who used the sea, after being wrecked, got his passage to London. He was easily convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. So being all of one heart and one mind, we rejoiced in God all the day long. But it was not long before I had strong impressions on my mind, that God had called me to preach. I mentioned this in my band, after I had often sought God by fasting and prayer. We set apart some days for the same exercises. Afterward they advised me to mention it to you. You said, " This is a common temptation among young men. Several have mentioned it to me. But the next thing I hear of them is, that they are married, or upon the point of it." I said, " Sir, I am married already." You said, " Care not for it ; but seek God by fasting and prayer." I answered, " This I have

done." You strongly recommended patience and perseverance therein ; and said, you doubted not but God would soon make the way plain before my face. Soon after you appointed me to be the leader of a band, and, in a little time, of a class. And God blessed me in both : but this did not at all alter my conviction that I must preach ; nay, it grew stronger and stronger, till, having no rest day or night, I was constrained to come to you again, and tell you just what I felt. You told me, " To be a Methodist preacher is not the way to ease, honour, pleasure or profit. It is a life of much labour and reproach. They often fare hard, often are in want. They are liable to be stoned, beaten, and abused in various manners. Consider this before you engage in so uncomfortable a way of life." I replied I had no desire to engage therein, unless it was the call of God ; and I did not regard what I suffered in doing the will of God. You said, " You may then make a trial to-morrow morning at Snowfields chapel." I did so. The Monday following you appointed me for Wapping chapel, and for the Foundry on Tuesday morning. It was near ten o'clock when I received the message. I soon went to work, but was engaged in meditation and prayer for assistance, all the time I was making my dough. As soon as I had done, (the rest of the family being in bed,) I went to prayer, in which I found great liberty. I then read in my Bible to find a text, and continued reading and praying till two o'clock. It was then time to call my fellow servant, and we went to work together, being employed, as usual, till near four, in preparing the bread for the oven. All this time I was still in meditation and prayer, but could not fix upon a text. Soon after four he went to bed again, and I went to prayer, till a quarter before five, when I went to the Foundry, but with much fear and trembling : and when I took up the hymn book I was so faint that I could not speak so as to be understood. The people therefore could not sing ; and as I was no singer, we were all at a stand. This did not a little increase my agitation, which was so great that I could not keep one of my joints from shaking. However, in a little while I went on ; and, after prayer, opened the Bible on these words, " Ye are bought with a price : therefore glorify God with your body and

spirit, which are God's." I now left the determination of this weighty affair with you; desiring, that if you judged I was called of God to preach, you would employ me (as my business would permit) just when and where you pleased.

In a little time I was more employed than my strength would well allow. I had no time for preaching but what I took from my sleep: so that I had frequently not eight hours' sleep in a week. This, with hard labour, constant abstemiousness, and frequent fasting, brought me so low that in a little more than two years I was hardly able to follow my business. My master was often afraid I should kill myself, and perhaps his fear was not groundless. I have frequently put off my shirts as wet with sweat as if they had been dipped in water. After hastening to finish my business abroad, I have come home all in a sweat in the evening, changed my clothes, and ran to preach at one or another chapel: then walked or ran back, changed my clothes, and gone back to work at ten, wrought hard all night, and preached at five the next morning. I ran back to draw the bread at a quarter or half an hour past six; wrought hard in the bakehouse till eight; then hurried about with the bread till the afternoon, and perhaps at night set off again. 'Tis true, I need not have continued so long in this way. For you proposed my going to Ireland with you, as a travelling preacher, in the beginning of March, 1756. I cheerfully agreed thereto, as you promised my wife should be provided for in my absence. This I mentioned to one of my friends, who said, "No doubt he intends it; but when he is gone, the stewards will do as they please:" adding, "How can you labour in Ireland while your wife is starving here?" I thought, however, I will talk with the stewards myself. I did; and Mr. Broelts and Hobbins asked, "What will be sufficient for your wife?" I answered, "Four shillings a week." But this they were unwilling to allow. So I remained at my business till another way was pointed out, which I followed till August, 1757. It was then agreed that I should travel, and that my wife should have that fixed allowance. This was the beginning of that settlement for preachers' wives, which (with the addition of forty shillings a year) continues to this day. I was

appointed for Epworth circuit, in Lincolnshire ; which then included Gainsborough, Grimsby, and Sheffield circuits. I left London August 15th, 1757, to walk to Epworth, about a hundred and fifty miles. My fellow labourers were Thomas Hanby, Thomas Tobias, and, afterward, Thomas Lee. It pleased God to give me much of his presence in my own soul, and to let me see some fruit of my labour. This supported me under the various exercises I met with. The first of these was at Rotherham, where John Thorpe, one of our local preachers, had just separated from us. He declared open war against us, particularly opposing what he called my perfection. Yet it pleased God to raise up many witnesses of it ; many that loved him with all their hearts ; several of whom are still burning and shining lights, and several removed into Abraham's bosom. Yea, it was observed that some of his own hearers, even while he was preaching against salvation from sin, were fully convinced of the necessity of it : and indeed never rested more till they were happy witnesses of it.

In autumn I was desired to go to Boston. I did so, and preached in a field on a Sunday evening with tolerable quietness. The next time I went, Mr. Allwood and I judged it would be best to be in the market place. We began singing, when suddenly a large mob appeared, with a drum beating before them : meantime a great number of squibs were thrown among the people.— Finding it was impossible to be heard, we proposed going to a friend's, about a mile from the town. The moment we turned our backs, the dirt and stones flew like hail on every side. On the bridge a man stopped us ; but we broke from him, and went on with the mob at our heels, throwing all that came to hand. Their number continually increasing, we thought it would be most advisable to face them, and try to get back to the town, where we had left our horses. My two companions immediately leaped over a wide ditch, which divided the field. But, before I could follow them, one of the mob coming behind me, struck up my heels, and gave me a violent fall. When I got up, my friends were out of sight, and the mob surrounded me on every side. I knew not which way to go, neither, indeed, how to go

at all ; being exceeding weak and spent, both with the fall and the many blows I had received. Being a little recovered, I tried to go through them to a foot bridge that was over the ditch. They forebore throwing till I drew near the bridge, and then all cried out, " Ditch him, ditch him." And just on the side of the ditch one struck up my heels again. Yet he stood by me, and let me rise up, and walk quietly over the bridge. There I was, in the middle of the mob, and had a large field to go through, parted from the road by high rails, which had a broad ditch on either side. When I came to the rails, I knew not how to get over, my breath being almost spent. And if I could, I saw no likelihood of escaping the being thrown into the ditch. However, they let me crawl over without much hurt. But as soon as I was on the road, the same person who stopped us on the bridge, collared me, to drag me to the horse-pond, while the rest plastered me over afresh with dirt. But just as we came to the pond, a gentleman called out to him that held me, " Let the man go." He immediately let go his hold, and I passed by the pond. I had still to walk through the whole town, my horse being at the far end of it. When I came into the street they got the dirt out of the kennels, and threw it into my face. As no door was open to take me in, I was obliged now and then to turn and face them (otherwise they seldom looked me in the face) in order to get breath. When I came into the market place there was a general shout for the glorious victory. Before I got to the inn, I was just ready to lie down, when one struck me violently, in order to strike up my heels. But I kept my feet, I know not how ; which I looked on as a great mercy ; as such a fall upon the stones might have done me much hurt. At the same time one threw a stone, which struck me on the temple. I then concluded I must die in their hands. But by the mercy of God I was strangely brought through all the multitude to the inn where I had alighted. Being sat down, my first thought was, " Father ! forgive them ; for they know not what they do." Indeed my mind (glory be to God !) was kept through the whole in perfect peace. By this time some of my friends, who had followed at a distance,

were come in, and were washing my wound, when the mob came to the door, threatening what they would do to the house if the landlord did not turn me out. He came in and said, "I cannot keep you here; for the mob will pull my house down." I told him, "Sir, I am in your house; but while I use it as an inn it is mine.—Turn me out at your peril. If you fear your house, apply to a magistrate for protection." He went to his landlord, who was a magistrate, and ordered him to take down the names of the chief rioters. After a while I mounted my horse in the yard, and then, the gates being opened, rode through a shower of stones, and came safe to our friend's house. But I was so bruised, almost from head to foot, than when I was cold I could hardly stir. And it was a full year before I quite recovered the hurts which I then received.

The next day I went back with a friend to town. I soon found three of the rioters, to whom I could swear, but the rest were absconded. Hearing the justices were in the hall, we went thither without delay; and telling the clerk we had business with the court, we were speedily introduced. The chairman, after we had made our complaint, roughly said, "You are the aggressor; and now you have the impudence to come to us, requiring justice against others!" I answered, "I am here. If I have broke any law, inflict the penalty upon me. But, in the mean time, I require you, in his majesty's name, to do justice upon these rioters." After more threats, I was desired to call upon one of them, at his own house, when the court was over. I did so, and he behaved exceeding well, sending his sergeant for two of the rioters; one of whom brought his master to speak for him: but the justice told him plainly, "Either make it up with Mr. Mather, or I will send you to jail directly." They both then asked pardon, promised good behaviour for the future, paid the expenses, and were dismissed. The third fled: but a warrant being given, he was apprehended; but upon the same terms he was released.

I cannot but remark another thing which happened this year. Nottingham had at this time no regular preaching. I had a strong desire to make a trial there, and came thither in the afternoon. At Matthew Bag-

shaw's I found John Johnson, of York, who said, "I am glad you are come; for here is a poor man who is to die to-morrow, whose behaviour is terrifying; he curses, swears, and threatens death to all who have given evidence against him; the jailer in particular. He will see no clergyman, but says he resolves to be a devil, that he may revenge himself. The minister has given me free leave to visit him. I went this morning, but he said, 'Give yourself no trouble about me. By this time to-morrow I shall be a devil, and then I will come and tear that villain in pieces.'" We immediately went to prayer, and vehemently wrestled with God on his behalf. After prayer we went to him, and at first sight observed an entire change in his behaviour. We inquired when this sudden change began, and found it was just while we were at prayer. But we had little opportunity of speaking to him, the minister (for whom he had sent) being just come, I could only say, as he passed by me, heavy-ironed, "Jesus Christ is both able and willing to strike off the heavier fetters of sin from your soul." He looked earnestly, but said nothing. We applied again to the throne of grace, before and after the preaching; and likewise great part of the night. We went early in the morning, and he was brought to us in the parlour. We talked and prayed with him some time. After rising from prayer, he said to the jailer, "I now forgive and love you; and I hope and pray that you will forgive me." This was quickly noised about the town, which filled the yard with spectators, who crowded about the windows, which gave us an opportunity of speaking to them also. He now acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and was resigned to it, having a strong hope of finding mercy. We attended him into the yard, when his irons were knocked off amid a vast crowd, to whom we spoke much on the occasion. Thence we accompanied him to the church, and afterward to the cart, which stood at the gate ready to receive him. But as he desired to walk between us, the sheriff gave him leave, and took much pains to keep off the crowd: at the end of the town we sung part of that hymn,—

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!

During the three first verses he seemed lifted up; but when we came to those words in the fourth verse,

His blood can make the foulest clean :
His blood avail'd for me !

he rejoiced with joy unspeakable. When we came to the place of execution the minister prayed and went away. The sheriff allowed us to pray with him again. And we committed his soul to God, in cheerful hope of meeting him again in Abraham's bosom.

In the year 1758, being stationed in Newcastle circuit, (which then reached as far as Musselborough,) I made a visit to Brechin, in my way to which I was seized with the bloody flux. As soon as I got home I took my room. I was not able to come down stairs for a month. My wife was quite a stranger at Newcastle; but I could leave her and all things to God. I spoke freely to all who came to see me, not letting any escape out of my hands. Mr. Blair, the minister, came frequently; and his son, a physician, visited me several times a day. It was now I discharged the clotted blood which had lain in me ever since the riot at Boston. Yet I did not recover till I prevailed upon my mother to give me a large quantity of toast and water. The disorder was then presently stopped, and in a day or two I went down stairs.

The Sunday following the sacrament was to be administered. I sent a line to Mr. Blair, and desired to be admitted to it, if it would not offend any of his parishioners. He immediately sent me a token, saying, "I will admit you if they are all offended." I went on Sunday, the first day I was abroad. The service lasted from nine in the morning to five in the evening; but I received no hurt. The next morning I breakfasted at Mr. Blair's, with the minister that assisted at the sacrament. They were sensible, candid men. Mr. Blair desired me to give them an account of the work of God in England. But when I mentioned the greatness of the work, and the fewness of the labourers, he said, "Among so great a number of people there must be many men of learning, why does not Mr. W. send them out?"—This led me to mention some of the prerequisites of a

Methodist preacher: namely, 1. A knowledge of God as his God, as having pardoned all his sins. 2. A life and conversation suitable thereto. 3. A clear conviction that he was called of God to the work; otherwise he could not bear the crosses attending it. 4. Some fruit of his labour, in convincing and converting of sinners. Mr. Blair broke out, "If these are the prerequisites of a Methodist preacher, they must not come here for them." I preached twice before I left Brechin, to a vast concourse of people; and afterward at Montrose: but I know not that it had any lasting effect, unless the removing of prejudice.

In 1759, I was stationed in York circuit, which then included Yarm, Scarborough, and Hull circuits. In this year the work at Whitby began, and we had a great outpouring of the Spirit in many places. The next year I was in Staffordshire, where it pleased God to work in a very eminent manner: at Darlaston, in particular, where there was a small but steady society of long standing. Several of these had borne much persecution, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Ever since their behaviour has been unblamable; yet none of them could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Some of these coming over to the prayer meetings at Wednesbury, and hearing (what they thought they had never heard before) that they were to believe now; that they might come to Christ now, without any other qualification than a sense of their own sinfulness and helplessness, were utterly astonished; and they began to be amazed at their slowness of heart. Presently a prayer meeting was set up at Darlaston. And in a little time many souls were set at liberty. The oldest stood out longest. After all they had done and suffered, they found it hard to come, as having done nothing. And when they were urged to it, in a class or prayer meeting, they were ready to gnash with their teeth. But whether they would hear or forbear, God continued to add more and more souls to his genuine Gospel. Nothing stood before it. Many of the servants and children of these old professors cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" Being pointed to the Lamb of God, they believed and rejoiced in God their

Saviour, to the utter astonishment of their unbelieving masters and parents. In one night it was common to see five or six (and sometimes more) praising God for his pardoning mercy. And not a few in Birmingham, Dudley, and Wolverhampton, as well as in Wednesbury and Darlaston, clearly testified that the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed them from all sin.

Meantime the societies increased greatly. In Darlaston we purchased ground and built a preaching house, and in Birmingham we hired a large building.—Satan was alarmed at this, and stirred up outward persecution, both at Birmingham and Wolverhampton. But it did us no hurt. Our brethren went on, not counting their lives dear unto themselves. He then made the minds of some of the old Methodists evil affected toward their brethren. They began to speak much evil (particularly in their classes) of them and of this new doctrine. And any defects in these new converts, (as they called them,) were magnified to the uttermost; and then brought as an undeniable proof that the whole matter was wrong. These were earnestly supported by Mr. J——s, formerly an itinerant, now a local preacher. To him they sent every tale that malice could invent, either against the work or the instruments employed therein; my wife in particular: whom indeed God had been pleased to make eminently useful. This embarrassed me a little: however, we went on, and the work did not suffer much, till about the time of the conference, when some of the preachers, going through the circuit, and hearing only one side, (though they might have heard both, as I was present,) both privately encouraged the opposition, and in their public discourses, dividing the people into the new and old believers, used many unkind expressions to encourage the old, and discourage the new believers, as they called them. This went hard with one who was not an old preacher, this being but the fourth year of my preaching, and the first of my acting as an assistant. However, by the grace of God, far less hurt was done than might reasonably have been expected. As I wrote to you the most minute circumstances of the work, and you were there in the very height of it, you judged it best to place me in

the circuit another year. But I made a false step in the beginning of it. Longing for peace, and preferring the judgment of other men to my own, I agreed that my wife should not hold any more prayer meetings. Immediately the work began to decay, both as to its swiftness and extensiveness. And though I continued to insist as strongly as ever upon the same points, yet there was not the same effect, for want of seconding, by prayer meetings, the blow which was given in preaching. Mr. Westell laboured with me this year. We constantly attended Stroud and Painswick: at both places there was a large increase; as also in several other parts of the circuit, which then included Coventry and Shrewsbury.

After having been married near ten years, I had this year a son. May he prove a blessing to many, and a comfort to his parents! In May and June you desired me to visit Wales, and regulate the societies there.—They were all then supplied by Mr. Taylor, who was exceedingly useful among them. But the people in general were difficult to get, and more so to keep, in society. In many places, however, they joined together, and not a few of them remain to this day.

In 1763, God revived his work in the Staffordshire circuit; especially at Birmingham, notwithstanding the disturbance which we constantly had during the preaching, and the danger of being murdered by the mob when we came out of the house. No magistrate could quell the rioters; or rather I should say, none would. For it is certain, any magistrate has the power to preserve the peace if he will. But at length, Mr. Wortly Birch took them in hand: he laid some of the rioters in the dungeon, and left them there a night or two to cool.—He fined the rest, according to law; obliged them to pay the money down, and gave it to the poor. By this means their stout spirits were humbled, and we have had peace ever since. This year a preaching house was built at Stroud, and another at Wolverhampton. But this was not long lived; for soon after the mob assembled and pulled it down to the ground. They had reigned here for a long time, insomuch that it was difficult for a Methodist to pass the streets. And now, one

could hardly appear in them but at the hazard of his life. The rioters had broke most of their windows, and swore they would pull down their houses, and every preaching house near. Hearing of this at Stroud, I rode over immediately and found the whole country in terror, as they expected every night the mob from Wolverhampton to pull down the preaching houses at Dudley, Darlaston, and Wednesbury, with the houses of the Methodists. They first came to Darlaston, a place long famous for rioting, hoping to meet with good encouragement. But a hog butcher, who lived near the house, hearing the alarm, leaped out of bed, seized his cleaver, and running out, swore death to the first that meddled with it. So unexpected a reception quite discouraged them, and made them run away faster than they came. Here we saw the good effect which the late revival had upon the town in general. There were few left who would either persecute themselves, or suffer others to do it. But Wolverhampton itself was still in a flame. A friend who was to accompany me to the town had procured a pair of pocket pistols, and offered me one. But I told him, "No: I am in God's work, and trust to his protection. And you must return your pistols, or I cannot accept of your company." He did so. When I came to the end of the town, the alarm was quickly spread; so that before we came into the main street we had company enough. But they were restrained, so that we received little abuse farther than bad language. I immediately went to the justice, who granted a warrant; but the constable gave notice of it to the rioters, so that none were taken: some fled, some hid themselves, and the rest set the justice at defiance. This occasioned several neighbouring justices to fix a day for meeting in the town. When they met, several of the rioters were brought before them. Three were bound over to appear at Stafford, where all the magistrates gave attendance. The proof against the rioters was full; yet the honourable jury acquitted them all! This gave them fresh spirits: so they hastened home with ribands flying, and were saluted with bells and bonfires, in one of which they burned me and my friend in effigy. Our friends now found it more dangerous

than ever to come into the town, or get to their houses. Before I left Stafford, I waited on Lord D—— with Mr. Hayes, attorney, the person who prepared the mob and himself made the first breach in the house. I told him plainly, either let Mr. Hayes rebuild the house, or we will try him for his life. He promised it should be rebuilt in such a time, and it was built accordingly. So did God deliver us out of this complicated trouble. And all the time his work prospered.

But what could not be done by persecution has been done by those who brought in a new doctrine among us. This soon checked, and has now well nigh destroyed, both the root and branch of vital religion. They who receive this new light not only despise and speak evil of those that begat them to God, but even deny the reality of that unspeakable blessing which they then received. They say, "We were then blind and knew nothing." Happy ignorance that enabled them to endure reproach, pain, want; yea, to carry their lives in their hands, counting nothing dear, but to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.

In August, 1770, I was stationed in Bristol circuit. Here I met with various exercises. But I was more than conqueror, and good was done in Bristol, and in several other places, particularly at Bath, where they were obliged first to enlarge, and then to gallery the preaching house. In the spring I was called to Monmouth, to open a preaching house, which was duly licensed. We preached with tolerable quietness till Sunday evening. The church wardens then came before me, went in, and shut the doors. Meantime the street was all in an uproar: I went on with Mrs. Hern and Miss Fortune (my only companions) till we met the mob, who opened to the right and left, and let us pass to the door. It was shut, but in a while I prevailed to have it opened. And one of them asked what authority I had to preach? I asked who he was? He said, the church warden. "Then you have no authority to question me. I shall not show mine but to a proper person. And I desire you will either behave well, or withdraw." Another said, "Sir, will you show it me? I am the chief constable." I answered, "Sir, I will."

While he was reading, the church warden looked over him and said, "O sir, this will not do." I said, "Sir, it will do for me; and I require all of you who stay to behave in a becoming manner. The chief constable then withdrew; but the crowd was so great that they could not half get in. And those without were so noisy, that nothing could be heard. So after a time I judged it best to withdraw. In the evening the mayor sent, desiring me to attend him in the morning at the town hall. I went. Soon after came the mayor, the clerk of the peace, and all the chief men of the town. The rector and curate used some harsh words. The other gentlemen behaved civilly. But they asked so many questions, and spoke so many at a time, it was impossible to answer. I said, "Gentlemen, be pleased to speak one at a time." But this could not be done. Only they all agreed in desiring me to promise that I would come no more. I told them, "I would make no such promise; no, not if my life depended upon it." So we parted as we met, and the next day I got safe to Bristol.

In 1773, I was stationed at Canterbury. During my stay in this circuit we had a fair prospect of doing good at Gravesend. The congregations were large, and not a few appeared to be much affected. The society increased, and all things were in a flourishing condition, till a poor creature, one George Gould, appeared, who at first came as one of our friends. But no sooner had he gained the affections of the people, than he pulled off the mask and preached Calvinism. And hereby such a wound was given to the society, as is not healed to this day.

In the year 1777, I was appointed for the Coln circuit. It was not long before that the gallery in the preaching house, being full of people, had fallen flat to the ground. And though no one was killed, yet some limbs were broken, and many poor people bruised. This obliged me to travel through many societies, in order to defray those large expenses of taking care of those that were hurt, and rebuilding the gallery, as well as building and furnishing a house for the preacher. But whatever fatigue I had was abundantly made up by the kindness and liberality of our brethren.

Having prepared the materials for the preaching house

at Paddiham, the next year, on the first of October, we laid the foundation. But a person pretending a claim to the ground, when the wall was about a yard high, threw a part of it down. We bore this outrage, and proceeded in the work. This emboldened him to engage three masons, who came in the night, when the roof was on, wrested out the sides of both doors with the lintels, with a yard of the wall above. They broke the sides of the two large windows, near three feet on each side; they then made a large hole in the pillar between the two windows, intending to throw down the house. But suddenly such a panic seized them, that first one and then the other stopped short and ran away. These returned no more. But their employer, with the third man, resolved to finish their work. Presently he was himself struck with a fear of being killed, and ran away, dragging his fellow with him. Being averse to law, we bore this also: but we set a watch on the house every night, till it was covered in and licensed, in hopes we should then be quiet. But on December the 21st, he brought two men at eleven in the forenoon, with a pickaxe and a crow, and directed them to begin at one of the doors, which was not quite repaired. The workmen stood amazed, but several of the townsmen quickly came to the place, two of whom were remarkably weak men, and one of them lame beside. One laid hold of the pickaxe, and one of the crow. They that held them were stout men, the terror of the country. Many took part on each side. I was in my room, and at first thought not to stir out. But fearing mischief might be done, I sent for a constable, and myself walked to the chapel. The young man was struggling with him that held the pickaxe, to whom I spoke, and he promised to be quiet. Meantime some took the crow from the other man, which their employer observing, struck a lad that helped them; he returned the blow; a battle ensued, wherein the gentleman was worsted, and rolled in the dirt.—Finding there was no other way, I procured a warrant from sergeant Aspinwall, for the chief rioters. This was served immediately. The next morning we waited upon him at his house, and he bound them all over to the assizes. But I recollecting that Mr. W—n had said before the sergeant, he was willing to refer the whole affair

to him, I sent him word, "I was willing too;" and desired him to name the time and place. But he would do neither. After preaching at Millend, in the evening, I went to bed; but my sleep departed from me. However, I rose as usual; but before I went out of my room I heard a knocking at the door. It was one from Paddiham, who mournfully cried out, "O, sir, we are all ruined! Mr. W—n has got a warrant for seven and twenty of us, and you are the first in it. We must be all at the sergeant's by noon." I told him, "I would be there." As soon as I came I saw Mr. W—n just going into the yard; I followed him close, to the great joy of my friends. We were near forty in number. The sergeant coming to the door, I asked, "Why I was summoned?" He answered, "For a riot." I said, "Sir, you cannot but know Mr. W. has done this out of mere litigiousness. But why should we trouble the whole country with our affairs? Cannot we settle it between ourselves?" To this Mr. W. agreed. So, as we had no bonds of arbitration ready, we both signed a memorandum to the same effect. The poor people then went home, in peace. After some difficulties the bonds were signed, and, after hearing all parties, the sergeant's sentence was, 1. That the ground (part of which we had purchased) should be equally divided between us and Mr. W.; and, 2. That he should pay us five pounds for the damage he had done. Thus we were at length delivered out of our trouble, and peace re-established at Paddiham.

What I may meet with hereafter, I know not: I can only say, I find it in my heart to spend and be spent for God, in promoting his glory and the salvation of men. To that end I am determined still to preach the whole Methodist doctrine, and to see that the discipline to which God has led us, be executed in all its branches. I see more and more, that where it is not executed, little lasting good is done. I know this is not the way of ease, nor the way to popularity. But as I set out without a view to either, so I hope to continue, by the grace of God.

I remain your affectionate and dutiful son in the Gospel,

ALEXANDER MATHER.

After reading and considering the foregoing account, I observed to Mr. Mather that he had wholly omitted one considerable branch of his experience, touching what is properly termed, The great salvation. He wrote me a full and particular answer, the substance of which I have subjoined.

JOHN WESLEY.

“ I answer, 1. With regard to the time and place, it was at Rotherham, in the year 1757, that I enjoyed it in a far larger degree than I ever did before or do now. Although my situation the next year laid many hinderances in the way, yet I both preached it plainly, and strongly encouraged those that had before experienced it, and such as professed to receive it at that time, either at Sunderland or elsewhere. This I continued to do in '59 and 60; in which time many were made partakers of it, in York, at and near Pocklington, in Hull, and various other places. It was the enjoyment of this which supported me in the trials I met with at Wednesbury in the two following years, during which many were added to the witnesses of it in Birmingham, Dudley, Darlaston, Wolverhampton, and Wednesbury. It was my own experience which emboldened me to assert it, even where it was opposed by our chief members, partly because of the faults of some that professed it; but chiefly because of the natural enmity of their own hearts to God.

“ What I had experienced in my own soul was an instantaneous deliverance from all those wrong tempers and affections which I had long and sensibly groaned under; an entire disengagement from every creature, with an entire devotedness to God; and from that moment I found an unspeakable pleasure in doing the will of God in all things. I had also a power to do it, and the constant approbation both of my own conscience and of God. I had simplicity of heart, and a single eye to God, at all times and in all places, with such a fervent zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls as swallowed up every other care and consideration. Above all, I had uninterrupted communion with God, whether sleeping or waking. O that it were with me as when the candle of the Lord shone upon my head! While I call it to my mind, my soul begins to wing its way toward that

immediate enjoyment of God. May it never be retarded, but press into the glorious liberty which is equally free for all the sons of God.

“As to the manner wherein this work was wrought, 1. After I was clearly justified, I was soon made sensible of my want of it. For although I was enabled to be very circumspect, and had a continual power over outward and inward sin, yet I felt in me what I knew was contrary to the mind which was in Christ, and what hindered me from enjoying and glorifying him, as I saw it was the privilege of a child of God to do. And such I knew myself to be, both from the fruit and the witness of his Spirit, which I felt in a strong degree, supporting me in conflicts of a very close and particular nature. 2. My conviction of the need of a farther change was abundantly increased by the searching preaching of Mr. Walsh, of blessed memory. This kept my conscience very tender, even to a degree of scrupulosity; and helped me to be much in private prayer, and kept me watching thereunto. 3. When I saw my call to preach, the difficulties attending that office showed me more and more the need of such a change, that I might bear all things: and by searching the Scriptures I saw the possibility of it more clearly, and was stirred up to seek it more earnestly. 4. When I began travelling I had no end, aim, or design, but to spend and be spent for God: not counting my life, or any thing dear, so I might finish my course with joy, which indeed I expected would be very short, as “I dealt my life at every blow.” I saw as clearly as I do now, that nothing furthers that end so much as a heart and life wholly devoted to God.

“This made me neglect the advantage I had in my youth, of a tolerable acquaintance with Latin, which I could easily have recovered; but this and every other gain I counted but loss, that I might win that intimacy with God which I still think to be the life of preaching. Therefore I husbanded all the time that I could save from company, eating, or sleeping, to lay out in wrestling with God for myself and the flock: so I devoted to God some part of every leisure hour, over and above the hour from eleven to twelve in the forenoon, and from four to five in the afternoon. Herein I was sweetly

drawn after God, and had many and large views of that salvation which I wanted, and which he had provided in his Son. The exceeding great and precious promises were clearly opened to me. And having a full assurance of the power and faithfulness of the promiser, my soul often tasted of their sweetness. And though unbelief prevented my immediate possession, yet I had a blessed foretaste of them. This made me desire the full enjoyment more and more. I abhorred whatever seemed to keep me from it. I sought out every obstruction. I was willing to offer up every Isaac, and inflamed with great ardour in wrestling with God; determined not to let him go till he emptied me of all sin, and filled me with himself.

“This I believe he did when I ventured upon Jesus as sufficient to save to the uttermost. He wrought in me what I cannot express; what I judge it is impossible to utter. Yet I was not long without reasoning; not concerning the work; of this I was absolutely sure; but whether such and such things as I soon discovered in myself were consistent with it. And this had its use, as it qualified me to advise others, who, though saved from sin, were tried in the same way.

“Upon this head I consulted Mr. Walsh, and his advice helped me in some degree. But God helped me much more in private prayer: herein I was clearly satisfied, 1. That deliverance from sin does not imply deliverance from human infirmities. 2. That neither is it inconsistent with feeling our natural appetites, or with the regular gratification of them: and 3. That salvation from sin is not inconsistent with temptations of various kinds. And all this you have clearly and fully declared in the ‘Plain Account of Christian Perfection.’

“I have only to observe that while my soul was following hard after God, I had frequent temptations to resume my Latin, and learn the other languages; especially when I observed some of my brethren who had made some progress therein, though they had not the same advantages with me. But the comfort I found in spending all my time as above, and the thought that however this might recommend them to some hearers, yet they were not hereby more instrumental than before, either in awakening, converting, or building up souls, made me quite easy about

it. This I have considered as the only business and peculiar glory of a Methodist preacher. Not that I think our brethren, who have made this progress, have not been useful in these respects ; but I think they are not more useful than they were when they were strangers to these things. And I doubt whether they are so useful as they might have been, had they employed the same time, the same diligence, and the same intenseness of thought, in the several branches of that work for which they willingly gave up all. For my own part, I want to feel the same principle ever actuating me which I felt the moment I set out.

“ Upon the whole, I find abundant cause to praise God for the support he has given me under various trials, and the wonderful deliverance from them. I praise him for so preserving me from impatience in them, that the enemy had no room to speak reproachfully. In all, he has given me free access to the throne of grace ; often with a strong confidence of deliverance. I bless God that the trials I have met with, even from my brethren, have never given me an inclination to decline the work ; nor, for any time together, to be less active in any branch of it. I always considered I had nothing which I had not received, and that the design of the Giver was, that all should be used with singleness of heart to please God and not man. I praise him, that though some of the affairs I have been engaged in, being quite new to me, so deeply employed my thoughts as sometimes to divert me from that degree of communion with God in which is my only happiness, and without which my soul can never be at rest ; yet he gives me always to see that the fulness of the promise is every Christian’s privilege ; and that this, and every branch of salvation, is to be received now by faith alone. And it can only be retained by the same means ; by believing every moment. We cannot rest on any thing that has been done, or that may be done hereafter. This would keep us from living a life of faith, which I conceive to be no other than the now deriving virtue from Jesus, by which we enjoy and live to God. My soul is often on stretch for the full enjoyment of this, without interruption, nor can I discharge my conscience without urging it upon all believers now to come unto Him *who is able to save unto the uttermost !* “ A. M.”

MR. BENJAMIN RHODES.

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TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

April 20, 1779.

REV. SIR,—I was born at Kexborough, a little town in the West-Riding of Yorkshire, in the year 1743. My father, who taught a school in the town, had the external parts of religion before he heard the Methodists: he used family and private prayer, read the Scriptures and other books of devotion in his family daily, and frequently instructed, exhorted, and catechized his children. By this discipline we were restrained from many evils, taught the fear of the Lord, and, in some measure, to seek that which is good. Before I was eleven years of age, I went with my father to Birstal to hear Mr. Whitfield. I found my soul deeply affected under the word. At first I had a kind of terror; but before the sermon was ended my heart was melted into tenderness and sweetly drawn after God; yet, a few months after this, a propensity to foolish pleasures sprung up in my breast and drew me into childish vanities. About twelve years of age I took a walk one evening into a large, thick wood, not far from the town. I left the path, and wandered in the thickest part of it, till I was entirely lost. Night began to close in upon me, and I did not know which way to turn my face toward home. It soon became quite dark; I then gave over rambling, and intended to have remained there till morning, when I hoped to find my way out. In this situation I found my former impressions begin to return with much sweetness. My soul was drawn out in prayer; I was deeply sensible of the presence of God: my heart overflowed with penitential tenderness, and under a deep sense of my own unworthiness, and of his goodness, mercy, and love, I sung and prayed with much fervour; yea, I was so thankful that the Lord had found me, while lost in a wood, that I would not for all the world have missed such an opportunity. My parents, being alarmed at my not returning

at the usual time, made great search for me. At last my father came to the wood side and called aloud : I soon heard him, and following the sound, got out about midnight without receiving any hurt. The impressions I received this night lasted for some time ; but youthful pleasure again prevailed, and drew me into such follies as grieved the Spirit of God, and greatly damped the fervour of my own spirits.

I was chiefly at home with my father, till I was sixteen years of age, and mostly attended the school. I had great opportunities of improvement, both in learning and religion, but my volatile spirit did not love study and confinement : the love of pleasure prevailed over my judgment ; and, though my vain enjoyments were rendered very painful, from my father's displeasure, and the terrors of my conscience, yet my attachments to them made me careless about things profitable, and prevented such an improvement as might have been made. About this time my father put me out to learn some branches in the wool and worsted business. His chief motive in placing me where he did, was, that I might be under the means of grace : and though I attended the preaching constantly, heartily believed the doctrine, and often felt the power of the word, yet I was so much taken up with pleasure, and those companions who led me from seriousness and religion, that at last, as with a flood, I was carried away ; not indeed into gross sins, (for I do not remember that I ever swore one oath or took God's name into my mouth upon a light occasion,) but into foolish company, gayety, and youthful vanities. But in my foolish career I was like the troubled sea ; the more I sought to please myself in vanity, the farther I was from it ; and sometimes my conscience terrified me almost to distraction, so that I have been afraid to sleep, lest I should awake in endless misery. All this time my understanding was clearly informed respecting the nature and necessity of religion, and I felt great reverence for it. None can tell the struggles I had in my breast between my conscience and my inclinations ; sometimes one, and sometimes the other was obeyed. I knew I could not be truly religious without parting with all that is contrary to seriousness, and without having the bent

of my mind turned from vanity to God. Neither did I make any pretensions to it, as I had not a fixed determination to forsake all and follow Christ.

When I was about nineteen I thought myself most miserable. I was quite sick of vanity, and so burdened with a sense of it on my conscience, that I could not find rest day or night. I then began to think on the mercy and goodness of God, which had been so abundantly made manifest to me in times past; but my follies so reproached me that I was ashamed to look up. I then found a willingness to be saved in God's way; and, groaning in my bondage, prayed, "Turn thou me, O Lord, and I shall be turned." The Lord heard, and turned the whole desire of my heart from every thing earthly unto himself: it was then I found such relents of soul as I had not done before. Nothing affected me more than a sense of God's long-suffering, mercy, and goodness; that, after I had so often refused his calls, quenched his Spirit, and abused his blessings, yet I no sooner cried to him than he heard and delivered me from the servitude of sin, and encouraged me to hope in his mercy. My whole heart was then given up to him. Prayer was now my chief business; and I often sung, very feelingly,—

Wealth and honour I disdain,
Earthly comforts all are vain;
These can never satisfy;
Give me Christ, or else I die.

In this state I continued several months, desiring and seeking God alone, without much interruption or temptation. About this time I was invited to a private meeting among the Calvinists. The minister spoke much of the power of imagination, and what a deluded people the Methodists were, and warned his flock not to come near them. I was greatly bewildered and terrified at this. I began to suspect that my call to religion and the change in my mind were only delusions. I was also tempted to think that all who professed religion were like myself. I was carried so far as to doubt of Christianity and of the being of a God! I thought the greatest part of the world consisted of heathens, Mohammedans, and Jews; the popish religion is almost as idolatrous as the

pagan ; there are but few Protestant Christians ; and but very few of these who act consistent with the doctrines of Christianity. These thoughts increased my infidelity till I was almost distracted. Darkness and horror sat brooding upon my mind, together with a gloomy fear of falling into nothing, or worse than nothing, at death. I had no power to pray : I only wished for a dark retreat where I might converse with darkness and misery alone. In this "horrible pit" I groaned for deliverance, yet was not sensible of a deliverer near. At last I found power to look up ; my heart began to melt, and the spirit of prayer returned ; I cried, and the Lord heard. The darkness began to disperse ; hope again visited my soul ; yea, it increased, attended with a degree of confidence in God, till the *Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings*. I beheld the *Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world* ; and had such a sense of the sufficiency of his atonement as I had not had before, with a conviction that I was interested therein. All my fears and doubts disappeared : I found the peace of God : his love was manifested to me, which caused me to love him again. Joy and gratitude now so possessed my heart that my cup was ready to run over ; and my soul, being freed from all its bondage, said, "God is become my salvation." Now my infidel fears were gone, and the truths of Christianity appeared to me in the clearest light. Not only my understanding *saw*, but all my powers *felt*, the truth thereof. I had a deep sense of a present God, whom I approached, in the name of Jesus, with reverential awe, confidence, gratitude, and love : and could call him, "My God and my all." In this happy season my joy frequently prevented my sleep, while my soul was taken up with Him who is *altogether lovely* ; and in ecstasies of joy, in the stillness of the night, I often sung my great Deliverer's praise. All things earthly appeared so empty that I thought nothing here below worth a thought, only as it tended to promote my eternal interest : I only desired grace and glory. I then began to conclude that my adversaries were quite overthrown ; and that I had only to march forward, and take possession of the "land of promise ;" I therefore pressed forward, rejoicing for some months.

At length, through unwatchfulness and giving way to levity, my comforts gradually diminished, till imperceptibly I was again drawn into a wilderness state ; and though I was diligent in the outward means, yet I had lost the pleasing sensations which I formerly had found therein.

About this time I was strongly beset by some Calvinists, who used all the arguments in their power to draw me into the belief of their doctrines. I was almost persuaded to believe "final perseverance," only I did not see how I could separate it from reprobation ; I wished to do it, but could not. I thought, if these must necessarily be saved on whom God begins a good work, then the rest must as necessarily be damned on whom he does not begin it. When I considered final perseverance as it related to myself only, it appeared so pleasant that I could hardly resist it : but when I considered it as a branch of the doctrines of unconditional election and reprobation, it gave me pain, and inclined me to renounce it. Reprobation appeared to me quite contrary to the whole purport of Scripture ; the nature of a holy, just, and merciful God ; the state of man as an accountable creature ; and to a future judgment, where rewards and punishments will be dispensed to every man *according to his works*. However, my lot being cast among those who held the decrees, I frequently heard the chief arguments that are used in support thereof. Sometimes their arguments appeared so plausible that I began to stagger in my mind, and to be much distressed : I then made it a subject of prayer ; and one night, after I had been wrestling with God that he would lead me into all truth, I dreamed of reading a passage of Scripture which gave me entire satisfaction. I could not remember the passage in the morning ; but on opening my Bible, the first words I cast my eyes upon were, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness ; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance." 2 Peter, iii. 9. Such light and conviction attended the words, as removed every doubt of God's loving all mankind ; and, from that day to this, my mind has been established in the comfortable doctrines of general redemption. But though I

was fixed as to doctrines, yet I did not find, as formerly, such a sweet intercourse with heaven ; and foolish desires began to rise again which formerly seemed to be dead. I had also very powerful temptations ; and earthly attachments prevailed too far upon my affections. Yet the hand of the Lord was over me for good, and preserved me from the dangers to which I was exposed.

When I was about the age of twenty-one, I heard Mr. Jaco preach on Heb. xii, 1. He insisted on the necessity of laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, in order to our running the Christian race. I saw the necessity of it, and was again stirred up ; and the Lord once more set me at liberty from every entanglement. In a short time my former comforts returned with more solidity ; and my understanding was abundantly matured in the knowledge of the Christian warfare. About this time I was desired to lead several classes. I found those meetings were both solemn and profitable to myself and others. The first quarter several found a sense of forgiveness ; and others were greatly stirred up. I was also desired to speak a word of exhortation ; this also I complied with. I now soon found work enough, as many came to hear what I had got to say. Indeed I have often stood up to speak to a large congregation when I would rather have undergone almost any punishment. However, the Lord gave strength according to my day ; for when I have begun to speak, my fear and trembling were quite taken away, and I frequently found much freedom in speaking ; and I have reason to believe that the Lord rendered my weak labours useful ; for some were turned from their wickedness to God ; some converted ; and many stirred up to press forward. On a Sunday I usually preached at several neighbouring towns, and sometimes visited them on the week days.

As the conference drew near, Mr. Jaco asked me if I was willing to travel, suppose there should be a want of preachers. I found much reluctance to this, arising from a sense of my insufficiency ; and I had such a love to the people where I was, that the thought of leaving them gave me great pain ; yet I desired not to be governed by my own inclination, but by the providence of God.

At the conference held at Leeds, 1766, I was desired to take a circuit, to which I consented. I set out in the twenty-third year of my age, and went into the Norwich circuit, where I stayed two years. The Lord was pleased to own my poor labours here in the conviction and conversion of several souls. At the conference in London, 1767, I was taken into full connection. My second circuit was in Oxfordshire, where I stayed two years. In that time the work of the Lord was enlarged abundantly. My next remove was to Canterbury, where I stayed one year. While I was here, my father died; since then I have been much in the north, to be near my mother and sisters. My next remove was into Lincolnshire, where I stayed two years among a poor people, who received the word gladly. We got into some new places; and in other respects God gave me some fruit of my labours. From hence I went to Hull and Scarborough, where I stayed three years. Here we raised several new societies, and in several parts of the circuit the work prospered. I next went to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I stayed only one year. Here I had many profitable opportunities, and had also the pleasure of seeing some fruits of my labours. From hence I went to Alnwick and Donbar, where I laboured one year. I had much riding here; but being among a people whom I loved, and with whom I laboured comfortably, I thought little of fatigues. I am now in Sussex and Kent. Since I came into these parts I have lost a sister and mother, who, I believe, are both gone after my father into Abraham's bosom; but I am left behind, almost the only person out of a large family. But how long or how short my stay may be, I leave to unerring wisdom: one only concern ought to possess me, to employ it as I ought; then, at the close of it, I also shall sleep in peace; and after a short absence, be with my dear departed friends!

Thrice happy meeting!
Nor time, nor death shall ever part us more.

I am thankful to God that he ever called me to this blessed work; as by this means I have gained more strength to my own soul; have been of some use to my fellow creatures; have had an opportunity of knowing a

little of the world, and of the state of religion among the Methodists and others : all which I judge to be more than a reward for what I have done and suffered. At present there is nothing so precious to me as religion and the cause of God : and my principal desire is to fill up my little sphere, that when I am called to give an account, I may do it with joy, and not with sorrow.

I am, Rev. sir, your affectionate son in the Gospel,
BENJAMIN RHODES.

MR. THOMAS TENNANT.

TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

July 1, 1779.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I was born in London, in the year 1741. My father came from Norfolk, and my mother from Cambridgeshire. They were very honest and well meaning persons, and constantly attended the service of the Church, but, I fear, knew not the power of religion. Shortly after they came to London, they saw Mr. Whitefield preaching to a great multitude in Moorfields. As they had never seen or heard of him before, they stared with great astonishment. What he said made some impression on them, and they frequently heard him till he left England : but when he went to Georgia they were at a loss what to do, till one told them they might hear the same kind of preaching at the Foundry: my father went and heard you, sir ; but the first time he did not understand it : but after awhile he understood you very well ; and both he and my mother were truly awakened. Presently after they were admitted into the society, which they counted a very great privilege, and continued therein, serving God and his people as long as they lived. As to myself, I had convictions of sin from my childhood. But, as I grew up, I endeavoured to get rid of them, which was partly effected : but I could not shake off the fear of death. I sometimes tried to comfort myself with the thought that death was only my common lot among the rest of mankind ;

but if I apprehend it near I was terrified beyond expression. One Sunday afternoon, when I had sauntered up and down St. James' Park, I went into Westminster Abbey, not for devotion, but to pass away time. I had not been there long before I was struck with a horrible dread! My sins were set in array against me! I hastened out of the church, but did not expect to get home alive. I seemed ready to expire, and was to my own apprehension,

Condemn'd the second death to feel,
Arrested by the pains of hell!

I cried to the Lord in an agony of fear, who heard me from his holy place, and came to my deliverance. My dread and horror were in a measure removed; and I resolved never more to spend any part of the Sabbath in merely seeking my own pleasure. When I was about fourteen years of age my father put me out to a person who feared God: while I was with him I had frequent visitations from God, and felt the drawings of his blessed Spirit, though I too often resisted them. However, I became more serious, which was increased by two severe fits of illness. Before this I had been exceedingly fond of going to plays; yet never went without a dread upon my spirits. When I was there I always seemed as one treading on forbidden ground; and particularly one night, when two persons were trampled to death in crowding up the same passage which I had but just before got up. I also took great delight in reading plays; for which purpose I collected a number of the best I could meet with, and often pleased myself and my companions with the repetition of some of the most striking passages in them. But I found nothing of this kind could give me any real happiness, and was constrained to say, *This also is vanity!* It will not satisfy an immortal spirit, it will not ease a wounded mind! At last, from a full conviction of this, I committed all my plays to the flames, and determined to spend my leisure hours in reading more profitable books. I therefore read your appeal to men of reason and religion with much satisfaction. Yet, on reading the former part of your sermon entitled "The Almost Christian," I was quite distressed, and ready to give up all

hope. I thought this *almost* Christian leaves me so far behind, that to be *quite* a Christian seems impossible to me. But when I had turned over the next leaf, and saw what was necessary to make a true Christian, viz., "the love of God," my heart was softened, and my hopes revived. I said, "This is religion; this is Christianity indeed! And this, Lord, is the very thing I want! O give me this love, and I shall be satisfied, and all within me shall bless thy name!" Frequently, when I have heard you preach, I thought you appeared as with a sword drawn in your hand, with which you cleft me asunder. At such times the word was indeed quick and powerful, piercing and wounding my inmost soul; it was indeed a discerner of the thoughts and intents of my heart: but it still left me without comfort to bewail my wretched condition. Thus I went on till my burthen grew too heavy to be borne. I mourned all the day long. My distress was very great, and I wanted to speak to some experienced person; but being naturally very close and reserved, I could not break through. I was glad indeed when one asked me to go to a meeting of Christian friends; but when I came to the door, and heard them singing, I had such an idea both of their goodness and of my own unworthiness, that I durst not presume to go in: therefore I walked back again with a heavy heart. Some time after this I joined the society; but for a long while durst not venture to go to the Lord's table. One Sunday I was determined to go; but when I approached, my heart failed me, and I went back without receiving; but, through the distress of my mind, my legs were scarce able to support me; and, being filled with fear, guilt, and shame, I trembled exceedingly: however, at last, as a poor, weary, heavy laden sinner, who had nothing to plead but, "God be merciful to me for Christ's sake," I ventured to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. Just before I came up to the table, these words were deeply impressed upon my mind,—

Cover'd with thy blood we are,
Find a part that does not arm,
And strike the sinner there.

This inspired me with such courage that I kneeled down

with a strong hope that I should not be a victim to God's justice, but a monument of his mercy: and when Dr. J. gave me the bread and wine, I was enabled to believe that Christ died for *me*, and was filled with peace in the Holy Ghost. I rose from the table with a glad heart, greatly rejoicing in God my Saviour. After this I walked in the loving fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. I found great sweetness in the word; yea, and in all the other means of grace. Indeed some of the most delightful moments of my whole life were spent in waiting upon God in his ordinances. I enjoyed great tranquillity of spirit, being delivered from my guilty, tormenting fears of death and hell. When I laid my body down to rest, I could repose my soul as on the bosom of Jesus, and say,—

What if death my sleep invade!
 Shall I be of death afraid?
 While encircled by thine arm,
 Death may strike, but cannot harm.
 What if beams of opening day
 Shine around my breathless clay,
 Brighter visions from on high
 Shall regale my mental eye.

Meantime I found an earnest desire to live to the glory of God, together with much love to precious souls. And hence I found a desire of preaching; on mentioning which, I was desired to go with a friend, who occasionally exhorted a few people at a house in St. George's Fields. At his request I ventured to speak a few words to them, and found freedom of spirit.

About this time I had a great desire to travel with you, sir. When you was informed of it, you was so kind as to consent to it. So I had the pleasure of accompanying you from March, 1770, to the August following, when I was admitted on trial as a travelling preacher, and appointed for the Newcastle circuit.

I believe very few, if any, of our preachers set out with so little courage: the depression of spirit I laboured under was nearly insupportable; and if it had not been for the affection and tenderness of my good friend, Mr. Jaco, who was at that time the assistant, I must have sunk under the burden. The loving, sensible people I laboured among, were also very kind to me, and bore

with me, though I was with them in weakness, fear, and much trembling.

The next conference I was sent into Lincolnshire, where I met with many trials, having both the inward and outward cross to bear. Afterward I was near a year among the poor loving people at Colchester, and I hope my labour was not in vain. From thence I went to Bradforth, in Yorkshire, and the year following to Newcastle again. I had now a little more courage than when I was there before; and, I trust, was more useful to the people: and from that time I have travelled with more satisfaction than ever I did before.

At present I find a thankful heart for the mercies of a gracious God, and desire to devote myself unreservedly to his service. Indeed it is comfortable to me to reflect, that "God is love;" that "he was in Christ reconciling the word unto himself;" that Christ Jesus "gave himself a ransom for all;" that "he tasted death for every man;" that "he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world:" and I have often wondered how any man of sense, who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, can use arguments in opposition to this. But as to the dispute concerning these points, I very seldom mention it in public: never, unless my subject naturally leads to it; and even then, I do it in as few and as calm words as possible: for I am quite convinced that a thousand exclamations and assertions, be they ever so vehemently delivered, will not amount to one argument on either side the question. But what I wish above all things is, that I may increase in the knowledge and love of God, and be more holy, happy, and useful every day of my life. Nevertheless, I am truly thankful for, and profited by the superior talents and labours of any of my brethren, who are more particularly called to explain and defend these glorious truths, which I have always believed.

Upon the whole, as far as I know myself, I love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and if he is pleased to continue to use, in any degree, me, his weak, unworthy creature, I shall be unfeignedly thankful, and hope to give him all the praise in time and in eternity.

I am, Rev. and dear sir, as ever, your dutiful son and servant,

THOMAS TENNANT.

MR. WILLIAM HUNTER.

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TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.*August 18, 1779.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—According to your desire, I take this opportunity to write a little of the dealings of God with me: but as I have not kept any account in writing, many things have slipped my mind. I was born in Northumberland, a little village near Placey, in the year 1728. I was put to school early, and taught to read the Scriptures from a child; but delighted most in the historical parts of them. I felt a degree of the fear of God when very young, and sweet drawings of love. But sometimes the thoughts of death were very dreadful to me, so that I felt very unhappy. I once dreamed that Satan came to me, and would have me: when I waked, I was full of fear, and prayed much that I might be delivered from him; and the impressions abode upon my mind for many days: but, as I had nobody to teach me the right way of coming to Christ, these good impressions gradually wore off.

When I was about fourteen, my father being a farmer I was put to learn all the branches of farming. My father was very severe with me, and I dreaded him very much: and yet I was often guilty of much disobedience against him; for which I have been much ashamed before the Lord. The first time you came to Placey, I, with several of my father's family, came to hear you: some of my brothers were much taken with you, and, I trust, will have cause to bless God for it for ever. When I was about sixteen I heard Mr. Hopper: as soon as he began to speak, his words affected me deeply, not with terror, but with love: I had a taste of heaven: it seemed as though I was created anew; there was a wonderful change in my tempers and conduct; I laid aside every thing that I thought was contrary to the will of God, and practised all religious duties. I attended preaching on all occasions, and felt much sweetness therein, and love to those that I believed were devoted to God. I went on in this way for

some time, till my companions began to take notice of me, and call me a Methodist. Some of them set upon me one Sunday, and cursed and swore bitterly at me, telling me I was going to leave the Church and the religion I was brought up in. This had a strange effect upon me; I gave way to them: they prevailed upon me to go to the alehouse: there I was overtaken by my old sins again. The Spirit of the Lord departed from me: my heart became as hard as a stone. Darkness covered my mind again, and I was as senseless to the things of God as though I had never known any thing at all about them. I went on in this wretched state many months, living totally without God in the world. Through the advice of a young man I went to hear preaching again. A great light was communicated to my understanding by the word, and it pierced my conscience like a sword. I felt my inward parts to be very wickedness: all the sins of my life stared me in the face, and lay as a heavy burden upon my conscience. I roared for disquietness of heart, and wept and made supplication. I was convinced I could not help myself; that I could not do any thing to reconcile myself to God: and I had many fears lest the day of grace was past. O, the distress of soul I went through for many months! It was as though I had been forsaken of God, and hell was already begun in me. But the Lord was pleased to give me power over sin. I forsook every sinful way and all my sinful companions. I sought the Lord with all my heart in all the means of grace. I attended preaching on all occasions and read the Scriptures with great diligence: the way of salvation, revealed therein through Christ, was made clear to me; and I pleaded nothing but the merits of Christ for forgiveness. I often rose in the night to read and pray, and the language of my heart was,—

If I ne'er find the sacred road,
I'll perish crying out for God.

I felt great love to the Methodists, especially to the preachers, as the servants of the most high God, sent to teach us the way of salvation. The people took notice of me, talked with me, and wished me to cast in my lot among them. I did so, though I did not think myself worthy: and I bless God, I have never felt a desire to

leave them since. I continued mourning after the Lord, and at length he heard my cry. One day, as I remember, I was reading in a book where the writer was answering that objection concerning the day of grace being past: the Lord was pleased to send me deliverance; I found springing hope, and a sense of his goodness. How did I admire the love of God and the love of Jesus Christ to me! All my thoughts were swallowed up in heavenly contemplation: and I could truly say, "The Lord is my life and my salvation, whom shall I fear? Thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me."

I now tried what the Spirit had wrought in me by the marks laid down in the Holy Scripture: and hence I found reason to believe that I belonged to Christ, and was a child of God. I made a free-will offering of all I had to be his for ever; and I thank him from the ground of my heart that I have been kept in the same mind to this day; though I have great cause to be ashamed that I have made no better improvement, and often mourn and weep on that account. When I had thus found the goodness of God to my own soul, I could not forbear speaking of it to others; and the Lord gave me wonderful light and courage in his blessed work. He helped me to reprove sin, wherever I met with it, with humility, meekness, and much prayer: yet without fearing the face of any man, though many said I was out of my mind, yea, and wished me out of the world. The Lord enabled me to set my face as a flint, and to bear a testimony for him wherever I went; and I was much blessed in so doing. There was a little town not far from ours, where I sometimes went, got a few poor people together, and talked to them about their souls. I often read the Scriptures to them, and sometimes made some remarks thereon. The Lord was pleased to bless my weak endeavours among them, so that a few of them gathered together, and the preacher joined them in a society, and put me in to be the leader. I met with many trials in this little way, and was often tempted to give it up; but I durst not.

I used to travel far on the Lord's day to hear the word of God. If it happened the preacher did not come, I was pressed upon to give an exhortation to the people.

This I frequently did, but I often went home distressed to the last degree, through a deep sense of my own unworthiness : yet it was not always so. At other times I was happy and lively, having strong evidence that I was doing the will of God. Meantime several of the preachers spoke to me about travelling but the importance of the work made me afraid ; till in the year 1767, at the London conference, Mr. Rowel recommended me, and I was taken in upon trial. I was then appointed for the Barnard Castle circuit, and entered upon my work with great fear : there seemed many difficulties in my way : however, I gave myself up to the Lord, and he was pleased to give me favour in the eyes of the people.

Two years after I was stationed in Yarm circuit. I was afterward appointed to Barnard Castle circuit again, and God was pleased to bless my labours, with that of the other preachers. We had such a work of God in several parts of this circuit as I never saw. Hardly any thing of the kind in England hath exceeded it, both with regard to its swiftness and depth : the power of God bore down all before it, and it seemed as if God was about to convert all the world. After I left this circuit, I was placed at Hull, then at York, and afterward in the Scarborough circuit. We had a gracious increase of the work of God here ; and I never found more enlargement of heart. We broke up much fresh ground, took in many new places, and many souls were converted to God. The last year you appointed me for the Thirsk circuit. This has been a year of trial, but the Lord has stood by me, and I am strengthened.

What success I may have for time to come, I cannot tell. It is still my one desire to give myself wholly to the Lord, and to his blessed work. I wish to live to better purpose than I have yet done, to be more fruitful in his house and in the world. I am conscious of many defects in myself, and feel my need of Christ every moment. My soul hangs upon him, and I experience salvation from day to day : and I trust he that has kept me till now will keep me to the end.

Wishing you all peace and prosperity, I remain, Rev. and dear sir, your affectionate son in the Gospel of Christ,

WILLIAM HUNTER.

POSTSCRIPT.

Richmond, August 29, 1779.

CONCERNING the account I gave you at London, as I wrote it in haste, I believe it is very imperfect ; several things have occurred to my mind since, which I should have put in if I had then remembered them.

As touching that great salvation, being saved from inbred sin, I shall simply relate what I know of the dealings of God with me in this respect. For some time after I knew the goodness of God to my soul, I was very happy : I sung in his ways for joy of heart, and his consolations were not small in me. I thought, indeed, I should *learn war no more*. It was then

I rode on the sky,
 Freely justified I,
 Nor envied Elijah his seat :
 My soul mounted higher
 In a chariot of fire,
 And the moon it was under my feet :

Jesus all the day long,
 Was my joy and my song ;
 O that all his salvation may see
 He hath loved me, I cried,
 He hath suffer'd and died
 To redeem such a rebel as me.

But afterward it pleased infinite Wisdom to open a new scene to me : I began to be exercised with many uncommon temptations, and felt my own heart ready to comply with the same : this brought me into great straits, and I began to call in question the work of grace in my soul. O, the pain and anguish I felt for weeks together ! Yet all this while I was very earnest with the Lord ; my soul clave to him, and I often said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Under this exercise I learned several things : As, first, that my nature was not so much changed as I thought : I found many things in me which opposed the grace of God : so that, without continual watching and prayer, I was capable of committing the very same sins which I had been guilty of before. 2. I began to be more acquainted with Satan's devices, and found power from

God to resist them. 3. I had very affecting views of Christ, as my great high priest, who was touched with the feeling of all my infirmities. 4. The Scriptures were precious to me, and I found great comfort in reading them. And, lastly, I was conscious of the need of a far greater change in my nature than I had yet experienced : but I then read mostly the Calvinists' writings, who all write that sin must be in believers till death : yet I found my mind at times deeply engaged in prayer to be saved from all sin. Thus I went on for a long time, sometimes up and sometimes down, till it pleased God to bring me to hear you at Newcastle. You preached, I well remember, from the First Epistle of John, chap. i, verse 9, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This was a precious time to me. While you were preaching, a Divine light shone in upon my heart with the word, and I was clearly convinced of the doctrine of sanctification, and the attainableness of it. I came home with full purpose of heart, not to rest till I was made a living witness of it. I had now a clear view, 1. Of the holiness of God, and saw that sin could not dwell with him. 2. I had a clear view of the purity and perfection of his law, which is a transcript of the Divine nature. And, 3. I felt my great unlikeness to both : and, although I felt no condemnation, yet, in the view of these things, I felt much pain in my spirit, and my soul was humbled in the dust before him ! O how I longed to be made like him, and to love him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. I had glorious discoveries of the grand provisions made in the new covenant for the complete salvation of the soul : and I went on in joyful expectation, crying to the Lord to put me in possession of all he had purchased for me, and promised to me : sometimes I seemed to be upon the threshold, just stepping into glorious liberty : but again fear and unbelief prevailed, and I started back. This cast my mind into great perplexity, and I often reasoned concerning the truth of the thing.

It would be tedious to relate the various exercises I went through for several years without opening my

mind to any one. I do not remember that I ever conversed with any one upon the subject, or ever heard any one discourse upon it. Only, I think, about 18 years ago, it pleased God that I heard Mr. Olivers preach upon the subject. His text was, "Let us go on unto perfection." His doctrine was clear, and his argument strong. My heart consented to the whole truth, and I had clearer views of the way of attaining it, namely, by faith, than ever before. This added new vigour to my spirit, and I seemed to be more on the wing than ever. I prayed and wept at his footstool, that he would show me all his salvation. And he gave me to experience such a measure of his grace as I never knew before : a great measure of heavenly light and Divine power spread through all my soul : I found unbelief taken away out of my heart : my soul was filled with such faith as I never felt before : my love to Christ was like fire, and I had such views of him, as my life, my portion, my all, as swallowed me up ; and O how I longed to be with him ! A change passed upon all the powers of my soul, and I felt a great increase of holy and heavenly tempers. I may say, with humility, it was as though I was emptied of all evil, and filled with heaven and God.

Thus under the influence of his power and grace, I rode upon the sky. My soul fed on angels' food, and I truly ate the bread of heaven. I had more glorious discoveries than ever of the Gospel of God our Saviour, and especially in his saving the soul from all sin. I enjoyed such an evidence of this in my own mind as put me beyond all doubt ; and yet I never had such a sense of my own littleness, helplessness, and unworthiness as now. So true it is, that only grace can humble the soul ! From the time the Lord gave me to experience this grace, I became an advocate for the glorious doctrine of Christian perfection. According to the gift he has been pleased to give me, I bear a testimony of it wherever I go, and I never find my soul so happy as when I preach most upon the blessed subject.

Thus I have simply related what I know of the work of God in my heart. I desire to give him all the glory. But I have great cause to be ashamed before him for my own unfaithfulness. I feel I need his grace every

moment : I stand by faith : I have as much need of Christ as ever : I may truly say,—

Every moment, Lord, I want
The merit of thy death.

Glory be to his name, I find my soul united to him, and my heart cries, None but Christ ! I am kept by his power : I enjoy salvation : my heart is fixed, my anchor is sure and steadfast : I believe nothing shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. I conclude with saying, though the whole of our salvation is from the Lord, yet he deals with us as rational creatures. He gives us light and conviction of our lost state ; then the heart is humbled, and the soul bows before him. He then speaks peace. This is done in a moment, and faith in the soul is the instrumental root of all Christian holiness. Thus the work of sanctification is begun in the heart, and the person is in a capacity of living to God, and growing in grace. If he finds us faithful in a little ; he shows us there is a state of greater liberty provided for us. The soul being open to the Divine teaching, he shows us our want of this. We seek it with our whole heart, and he is pleased to put us in possession of it. This too is generally given in a moment, and perfectly frees the mind from all evil tempers, and enables us to “love the Lord with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves.” Being thus perfected in love, we are much more qualified to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, than ever. O precious salvation ! let me ever be a witness of it !

W. H.

MR. JOHN ALLEN.

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TO REV. JOHN WESLEY.

September, 1779.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I was born at Chapel-in-the-Frith, Derbyshire, in June, 1737. My parents were honest labouring people, and brought up eight children, all yet living; most of them convinced of sin, and some converted to God. As my father was a Churchman, and my mother a Presbyterian, I went sometimes to Church, sometimes to the meeting: and frequently I went with my mother to hear the Methodists, among whom I had several relations. I stood in awe of these; and when I was in their company behaved more seriously than at other times.

From eight to ten years of age I had many serious thoughts, especially when it thundered and lightened, or when I heard a passing bell; and I was always preserved from swearing, drunkenness, and other scandalous sins. But I delighted much in dancing, singing, and cards, and in making every one merry wherever I was. When I was about sixteen I was deeply convinced of sin by reading the eighth chapter of Jeremiah; particularly these words, "The harvest is past; the summer is ended, and we are not saved." I concluded that my day of grace was past, and that there remained for me nothing but "judgment and fiery indignation." The thought of this almost broke my heart, and caused me to weep bitterly before the Lord. But after a time I grew as careless as before, and continued so for above five years, only with intervals of seriousness, and many good desires, but none brought to good effect. My great hinderance was the being joined with a society of singers. I found I could not stay with them and be religious; so I thought I would give religion up for the present: but at times I was of all men most miserable. Another affliction soon came upon me: I was from a child very fond of my mother, and often thought I could not bear

to live after her. In March, 1759, she died. This awakened me once more. I resolved to break off at once, and to seek God with all my heart. My companions, thinking I had only left them through grief, and would soon return, said nothing to me at first; but by and by, when they heard I was turned Methodist, they set upon me in earnest. But by the grace of God I withstood all, and came out from among them.

At that time we had no preaching near us. I often went twelve miles on Sunday to hear a sermon. But in September following, Mr. Crab came to preach at Chinley, and joined a few together in a society: I willingly cast in my lot among them, and blessed be God, have never repented of it. About Christmas, I got Mr. John Oliver to preach at my father's house. We had no more preaching there for some time. However, three of us continued to meet together to sing, and pray, and converse. One evening when we were met, I was in such distress that I concluded I could live no longer if God did not pardon my sins. Presently I heard a voice saying, "It is I: be not afraid:" I looked about to see who it was that spoke; but could see no one. However, my mind was much refreshed for a season, and I remained between hope and fear till we met again. As I was then crying to the Lord, these words came strongly to me, "The Lord is at hand! The Lord is at hand!" But neither did the impression made by this continue long. Soon after I gave way to trifling, and so grieved the Holy Spirit that I hardly dared to look up, or hope for mercy. But while I was overwhelmed, and feebly crying out, "I am oppressed! Lord, undertake for me;" these words were applied, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? Put thy trust in God." This comforted me much. But still I could not rest without a clear sense of my being reconciled to God. I was one day crying to God for this, and wrestling with him in prayer, when I felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart and was constrained to cry out,

For sinners, like me,
He bled on the tree,
Ah, who would not love such a Saviour as thee!

Now I could say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. My soul was filled with peace, and I rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Soon after we began to have constant preaching; and a little class was formed, of which I was appointed leader. I loved meeting in class; but I trembled at being the leader: nevertheless I took up my cross. And many times it proved a blessing both to the people and to my own soul.

Before this I had many thoughts about preaching: but I saw not how it could be, as I was deeply sensible of my own ignorance. This I often laid before the Lord, praying him to give me full proof, if it was his will. Meanwhile I sometimes gave a word of exhortation, which it pleased God to make useful. This encouraged me to speak again; but it was with fear and trembling; and I often thought, "If I get this time over, I will speak no more." Thus I went on for more than twelve months, before I attempted to take a text. After I had exhorted and preached about four years, I was, in the year 1766, received on trial as a travelling preacher. And although my heart was in the work, yet I was frequently tempted to give it up: but God suffered me not. He again and again refreshed my soul therein and encouraged me to go on, by letting me see the fruit of my labours.

Several years after I had thoughts of altering my condition. Upon this I consulted my best friends. I gave myself to prayer; and, after much deliberation, married Miss Jane Westal, of which I never had cause to repent. We lived together in perfect harmony, till, on the 30th of June last, she was seized with the epidemic distemper. At first we were not apprehensive it was the fever: though she herself judged it was, and believed it was the messenger of death. As her fever increased, and her end drew nearer, she was happier and happier. She said very little to me about dying; because she was sensible it would give me more affliction than I should be well able to bear. But to others she spoke freely concerning it. and with the greatest composure she said, "I shall soon be

Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.

The Tuesday before her death she seemed to be quite

transported with joy. When I went up stairs, I found her with heaven in her look, repeating the following lines :—

The world recedes ; it disappears ;
 Heaven opens on my eyes !
 My ears with sounds seraphic ring :
 Lend, lend your wing !
 I mount ! I fly !
 O grave, where is thy victory ?
 And where, O death, thy sting ?

On Friday she seemed like one from above. There was in her such a spirit of love and gratitude as I never saw before in any creature. She thanked and blessed every one that did the least thing for her. She often prayed that God would reward me for all my kindness to her ; and broke out, “ My Lord ! my God ! my Father ! my Husband ! my Friend ! I long to see thee ! ” When she could speak no longer, I desired her, if her soul was happy, to lift up her hand. This she immediately did ; and soon after fell asleep.

By her death I lost one of the best of wives, and my two small children one of the best of mothers. In many things she was a pattern to the flock of Christ ; particularly in plainness of dress, and of speech, in neatness, in every relative duty, as well as in private prayer. This I never remember her to have omitted three times a day. Had any told me beforehand how I should be able to bear her death, I could not have believed it. None but God can tell what I felt. But I did not feel a murmuring thought ; nor ever, for one moment, imagined that God had dealt hardly with me. I could still say,—

Thy med'cine puts me to great smart ;
 Thou wound'st me in the tend'rest part ;
 But 'tis with a design to cure :
 I must, I will the touch endure.
 All that I prized below is gone :
 Yet, Father, still thy will be done !

I am now more convinced than ever that religion does not turn us into stocks or stones ; that it is intended not to root out, but to regulate our passions ; and that there may be the most sensible feelings with full resignation to the will of God. This, I bless God, is my own experience. I have long been telling the people that God

would give me suffering grace for suffering times : and I am now a living proof of it. As I have endeavoured to water others, God hath watered me again ; and not as waters that fail, but as a fountain of water springing up within my soul. Let the Lord now “do with me as seemeth him good.”

I'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for that's to come.

Hitherto the Lord has been my helper, and he is the same for ever. So far as I know my own heart, I have no desire but to live to his glory, and to promote, so far as I am able, the interest of my Redeemer. My greatest grief is that I do not love God more, and that I have not more of heaven in my heart.

I bless God, I have for twenty years been steady in my principles ; having never, that I know of, however I was tempted, wavered for one hour. I have read many things on the other side of the question, but was not in the least shaken. I still believe that Christ “gave himself a ransom for all ;” and that “by the grace of God he tasted death for every man,” that he might “redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

If this imperfect account may be of use to any, it will answer the end that is wished for by,

Rev. and dear sir, your son in the Gospel,

JOHN ALLEN.

MR. THOMAS HANSON.

Crowan, March 11. 1780.

It is very difficult to write where self is concerned. But as I am requested, I shall endeavour to give a brief account of those circumstances in my life which particularly discover the Divine pity toward me.

I was born of honest parents, in Horbury near Wakefield, in the county of York, I think in May, 1733, the youngest of two sons at a birth: my parents having had six sons and two daughters. He that was born with me died in his childhood. My father died when I was near eleven years old. Six, out of the seven of us that lived, have found mercy and forgiveness through Christ. My truly pious mother had the happiness to see it before she died, though she has been dead above twenty years. Two of my elder brothers fell into sin, and turned back; but one is restored, I hope to favour, and to heaven. The other is not yet recovered: but O, may he be soon! We always lived in love and harmony. I never had, to my knowledge, twenty angry words with either brother or sister in my life. I do not remember to have heard an oath in all the family. About thirty-four years ago my mother and three elder brothers were brought to God. I was then convinced, and a little awakened, by hearing Mr. Francis Scott; the very man (I think) by whom my ever dear mother had been awakened and brought to God. From that time my good desires did not quite leave me. I hope my mother's prayers, tears, and advice will never leave my mind and heart. I was a thoughtless, careless, Christless son before that time, and had no fear of God before my eyes.

I was placed, at about thirteen years of age, in the profession which my father and brothers had followed, viz., a clothier. I now often went to hear the Methodist preachers, though we had some miles to go. Many of those that are now, I doubt not, singing in heaven, used to go and come with me in the evenings through the woods; often singing those sweet words:—

Break forth into singing, ye trees of the wood;
For Jesus is bringing lost sinners to God.

I used to pray inwardly in my way to the preaching, yea, and often turned aside to pray. I was afraid to be seen or known to pray alone: so I sought out every private place that I could. We had much persecution then, and a great deal of talk about false prophets in sheep's clothing. But the most common name for them was the damnation preachers, which I thought was far from sheep's clothing. So that did not hinder me much. But I was greatly

troubled with horrid suggestions, and had many fears (no doubt from the wicked one) in private prayer : so that I was for quite laying it aside. I was afraid to go to it ; and yet I durst not give it over. I was in a strait on another account ; I was ashamed of the Gospel : I did not stand firm on God's side ; and yet I durst not be on the devil's side. I was very fearful of being deceived, reasoning and doubting for several years, whether the knowledge of pardon was attainable here. I thought God did forgive men their sin ; but that none could know it for himself. But afterward I was clearly convinced by hearing my brother's experience, and weighing the scriptures that he urged for it. And I had then a comfortable hope of one day finding it ; but for some years I was between hope and fear. When I was about nineteen years old, in 1752, by my eldest brother's advice I went to Mr. Byrrie's, at the Deighn-House, near Nether-Thong. Here I stayed for near four years. Divine Providence certainly cast me here, where I had all the advantages I could wish for, having two schoolmasters near at hand. I wrought seven or eight hours a day, with my book before me, and spent the rest of the day and part of the night in learning. This I did during the whole time I was here. Mr. Hinstiff taught me to write, and cast accounts, for above a year ; and Mr. Wood, of Nether-Thong, the Latin master, taught me a little Latin and Greek. I got what I could by heart in the day, and said it to him at night. But as soon as I left this place, I laid these studies aside, and resumed them no more to this day. I have since had far better work, and could not see any need of these for the understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

We had no Methodist preachers here. I did not hear ten sermons, except at church, for near four years. Here I was greatly beloved by those that had any seriousness, and greatly hated by those that had none. For I could not hold my tongue about religion : my conscience would seldom let me be quiet. I told them, we must know our sins forgiven, or perish for ever. And frequently I wept with some of them about it. Several thereabouts came to me for advice concerning their souls : though I, poor creature, was ignorant enough, and well nigh lost in my books.

My conscience during these years often alarmed me. But now it would give me no rest for want of Christ and pardon. So I determined, notwithstanding many offered me favours in worldly things, to go home to my mother and brothers. Several wept and entreated me to stay. I told them, I cannot save my soul here. I have not the means suitable for it.

Home I came, in 1756, with a full resolution to seek Christ till I found him, or die in the seeking of him. Then I sold, or gave away, nearly all my books, and, through grace, began to be as diligent in the ways of God as I had been in study. I now added fasting to all the other means of grace. Soon after this the tempter told me, "Thou art good enough." But a sermon of honest brother Ash, on Gal. ii, 21, and the words of my dear mother, who said, "Though I bore you, if you do not come to Christ, stripped of all, you will never be saved," tore away my self-righteousness. God now taught me to expect Christ and pardon every hour. My burden was too great to be expressed, when God had, by various means, (particularly by reading the Bible, and the extract of Ambrose on the new birth, on my knees,) brought me, for three weeks, to the brink of despair. Just before I found pardon, I was miserable beyond description.

On July the 16th, at night, 1757, under my brother Joseph's prayer, I yielded, I sunk, and, as it were, died away. My heart, with a kind, sweet struggle, melted into the hands of God. I was for some hours lost in wonder by the astonishing peace, love, and joy which flowed into my heart like a mighty torrent. When I came to recollect myself, I asked, What hast thou done? It was sweetly, but deeply impressed, "I have made thee mine." No tongue can tell what peace, love, joy, and assurance I then felt. My willing heart and tongue replied, Hast thou thus loved me? Here I am, willing to spend and be spent for thee. God now gave me to see all creation, redemption, grace, and glory in a new light: and every thing led me to love and praise him. From this night, I could not hold my tongue from speaking of the things of God. A few days after my happy conversion, I felt anger at one who persecuted us. Soon after my peace left me. Then the tempter said, "He that is born

of God sinneth not. But thou hast sinned: therefore thou art not born of God. Thou hast deceived thyself." I was then in a great measure ignorant of his devices; so gave up my shield; and was in the depths of distress, ready to choose strangling, for near two hours. It then came to my mind, What if I have deceived myself? pardon is free, and given in an instant. It is ready for needy, lost sinners. I will go as I am; cast myself on the ground, and on Christ at once. My former peace, love, and joy returned in a moment. This sore trial taught me more watchfulness. After this I walked in great love and peace for near two years, buying up every opportunity for prayer, hearing, and reading. I read the chief part of the Christian Library, with Mr. Wesley's works that were then published; and several other books, to my great help, instruction, and comfort.

Now the same Spirit that witnessed my adoption cried in me night and day, "Spend and be spent for God," yet never was any one more timorous: I thought the work was so great, and my abilities so small. I cried, I am not fit: I wept and kept it to myself for months. O what a struggle had I between my unfitness and my love to God and souls! After this the Osset people, by earnest entreaties, prevailed on me to pray in public: and it pleased God to make it the means of awakening some sinners. Then I was persuaded to exhort: God blessed this also to the conversion of several in the neighbouring towns. Now began my warfare with the various sects about us, who came, when I had preached at Osset, to dispute with me often till midnight. But I was soon heartily weary of dispute: for it caused a decay in my peace and love. My inbred corruptions now began to perplex me more than ever, and to be a heavy load indeed for some time. But one day meeting with a few young men, (as I often did,) God gave me such a deliverance, and such a weight of love as I had not heretofore. I seemed too happy to live on earth, and thought God was going to take me home. My joy allowed me little sleep for weeks. I told it to none but my brother; and to him only, when I could keep it no longer from him. Not long after this, a letter came from Mr. Thomas Olivers, (who afterward behaved with the tenderness and wisdom of a father to

me,) to let me know that I was appointed by the conference to travel in the then York circuit. This was done wholly without my knowledge. No one had spoken to me about it, nor I to any one. I already preached four or five times a week about home, and loved the people too well to desire to leave them. In my answer to Mr. Olivers, I said, "I have no doubt of my call to preach; but have no desire to be a travelling preacher. I am not fit for it. I cannot come." He replied, "If your father was dead, and your mother lay dying, you must come and preach the Gospel." I wept a fortnight about it. I said to my brother, "Go you: you are more fit than me." He said, "God knows who is fit. He has called *you*: therefore go."—The gracious Spirit working in me a willingness to spend and be spent for God, and my brother persuading me, I went in 1760; and through grace have continued unto this day. In all this time I call the all-seeing God and his people to bear witness, that I have sought nothing but his glory, in my own salvation and that of others. I have been in most of the circuits in the kingdom. And I trust God has been pleased to use me, and those with me, during these twenty years, to unite thousands to the societies. But it is better to leave this to God and his people. They are our epistle, written by Christ to the rejoicing of our hearts. May their conversion be known and read by all that know them!

I have been in dangers by snow drifts, by land floods, by falls from my horse, and by persecution: I have been in sickness, cold, pain, weakness, and weariness often; in joyful comforts often; in daily love and peace, but not enough; in grief and heaviness through manifold temptations often. I have had abundance of trials with my heart, with my understanding and judgment; with various reasonings among friends and foes, with men and devils, and most with myself. But in all these God in mercy has hitherto so kept me, that I believe none can with justice lay any single immoral act to my charge, since the day God through Christ forgave my sins. All my design in preaching has been, and is, to bring sinners to Christ; and to build up saints in their most holy faith, hope, and love, to a perfect man. To this end, the chief matter of my preaching has been the essentials of religion;

such as the lost state of man, depraved, guilty, and miserable, by nature ; his justification through the alone merit of Christ by faith only, together with the witness and fruits of it : the new birth ; the necessity, benefits, and fruits of it, in all inward and outward holiness. I have endeavoured to explain the new covenant, in its benefits, conditions, precepts, threats, and rewards. I have shown that perfect love is attainable here by those that press for it with their whole heart. I teach piety to God, justice and mercy to men, and sobriety in ourselves, endeavouring to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and man in every station of life, and in all relations. I also endeavour to guard souls against the temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil ; against the hurtful opinions that surround them ; and against the hinderances of their repentance, faith, hope, love, and holiness. I have also shown them the danger of delay, of refusal, or of drawing back to sin, death, and hell. In the pulpit I have seldom meddled with the decrees, or the five points of debate. I suffered so much loss by them before I set out to travel, that I determined not to meddle with them, but when my brethren were in danger of being led aside or hurt by them. So far as I see clear evidence for any of these things, I hold and prove them as occasion offers. But where I see no sufficient proof of a proposition, I leave the discussion of them to those that are wiser. But yet I cannot help thinking that many of these disputes are not much more than a learned play ; and if wise men would but play with these in good humour, it would not much grieve one. But when they grow angry, and call each other by vile names, because they differ from them herein, no doubt the devil has a great hand in it. He aims to undo, by the nonessentials in religion, the good that is done by insisting on the essentials. This has often been a cause of fear and grief to me. But, having resolved to take Christ for my sufficient teacher, I am now contented to know what he has revealed, and to leave the rest to another world. I have from my beginning thought myself the poor man's preacher ; having nothing of politeness in my language, address, or any thing else. O that in the day of Christ's judgment I may rejoice, not only in the sincerity of my labour, but in knowing that I have not preached, and

laboured, and suffered, without fruit ; but have been the instruments of gaining souls to, and of keeping them with Christ ! And O that he may present them to the Father without blame, in perfect love ! This is the real desire of

THOMAS HANSON.

MR. THOMAS HANBY.

TO REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. SIR,—MY father removed from Barnard Castle, in the county of Durham, to live in the city of Carlisle, where he was employed by a company of gentlemen to carry on a branch of the woollen manufactory. Here he married my mother, who was a person of some small property ; by whom he had three children, myself being the youngest. I was born December 16, 1733.

After some years, the factory was given up, and my parents came to live at Barnard Castle again. My mother died when I was about seven years of age, and my father soon after. He was much addicted to drunkenness, which made him neglect the care of his family ; by which means he reduced his helpless offspring to a variety of afflictions. I lived some time with an aunt, who had been a person of considerable fortune, but was reduced by the extravagance of my uncle, my father's brother. It is true, I was put to school for some years ; but made no considerable progress in learning. Before I was twelve, I was put out to a trade ; whereby a kind Providence enabled me to provide for myself such things as I stood in need of. The first serious impression that I remember, was when I was about six years of age. I was in a yard belonging to the house where we lived, in Barnard Castle, and looking up to heaven, I was struck with wonder, and called aloud, "God Almighty." But such horror seized me, as made me run

home, and shut the door with all speed. My mother reproved me, and said I had been doing some mischief; but I assured her I had not. She then insisted upon knowing the cause of my uncommon haste and of my shutting the door with such violence. I told her I was in the yard, and called aloud, "God Almighty," and I was afraid. What she thought I cannot say; but she said no more to me upon the subject. A few years after, I was greatly alarmed by my sister talking of the day of judgment, which I had not heard of before. But these serious impressions wore off, and I began to be

"Rough in my manners, and untamed my mind.

When I was about thirteen, hearing the bishop was coming to confirm the children in our town, I began to think some kind of reformation and preparation was necessary: accordingly I applied to a relation, one John Robinson, a malster, who was a sincere man, and esteemed and beloved by all men. He taught me all he knew; viz., many questions and answers, with a great number of prayers; instructed me in the Church catechism, (for though I had learned it when at school, I had now entirely forgotten it,) and in short made me, I thought, a very good boy. The Sabbath came when the bishop was to confirm; and I having passed my examination with the minister, was introduced to the bishop. This was in the forenoon; and toward evening I went with some of my companions into the fields, and played at our usual games. But before I went to bed, horror of conscience seized me, and I thought I heard a voice say, "Thy confirmation is made void, for thou hast broke the Sabbath." What to do now I knew not. However, I began to make myself good, by reading and repeating many prayers. In this state I continued, till it pleased God, of his infinite mercy to send a poor man, one Joseph Cheesborough, a shoemaker, and a Methodist, from Leeds; who, having received the *truth* himself, was willing to impart it to others; not by preaching or exhortation, but by friendly discourse with his former acquaintance; for he was a Barnard Castle man. Joseph Garnet, one of our preachers, now with God, and a few others, first received the *truth*. They met

together in an upper chamber for fear of the mob. They read the Scriptures, and the books you had then published, sung hymns and prayed. I went one evening with a few of my ungodly companions, and as they were disposed to mock, I joined with them. However, I found something within that was far from justifying my conduct, and a secret persuasion that those despised, and persecuted people were able to show me the way of salvation. I went again the next night, (for they met every night,) and begged I might be permitted to come in among them. Accordingly I was admitted, and found myself sweetly drawn to seek an unknown God. From that time I missed no opportunity of assembling with them. My cousin Robinson went at the same time; but the minister sent for him, and laboured to convince him that he and the Methodists were all in an error: and to prove it, he showed him several old puritanical books, which treated on the new birth, &c., and told him, "It is a false religion because it is an old religion!" My cousin, at that time, and for four years after, was an entire stranger to himself and his need of a Saviour: the minister prevailed on him to leave the Methodists; and my great opinion of his piety made me, though contrary to my inclinations, leave them also. The minister told my cousin, provided he would form a religious society upon rational principles, he would sometimes come himself. He accordingly did, and in a little time we had a larger society than the Methodists, of formal professors who could play at cards, take their pleasures, and conform to the world in almost every thing. During this period, God still worked upon my tender mind, and I was fervent in prayer, reading, and every other exercise of religious duty. I was sometimes much tempted, but knew not that it was temptation. I also found remarkable comforts, but knew not what they meant. I thought I would pray at the same place again, which I did, and was greatly surprised not to meet with the same joy. In this state of ignorance I continued till our society dwindled away, and none remained but my cousin and me: I said to him one night, I fear we are wrong in leaving the Methodists; we can meet with none who can show us the way of salvation like them; come let us go and join them again. He had some

objections, but my importunity prevailed with him. Accordingly we went, and it being their class meeting we were admitted. In about twelve months he found peace, and ever after continued in the way, a very serious, steady, and circumspect walker, till the Lord took him to himself. About this time Mr. Whitford, the first Methodist preacher, came to Barnard Castle. He preached abroad to a very large, but unruly congregation. I was much affected, especially when he repeated those words, "O let not Christ's precious blood be shed in vain."—[Mr. Whitford left the Methodists some years after, and turned Calvinist, and I suppose would now be shocked to use the words which had such effect upon my mind, that I never could forget them.] After Mr. Whitford, we were favoured with Mr. Tucker, Mr. Turnough, Mr. John Fenwick, Mr. Rowel and others; who often preached to us while the blood ran down their faces, by the blows and pointed arrows thrown at them while they were preaching. Soon after, you, sir, paid us a visit, but were interrupted by the fire engine being played on the audience. I and our few friends did all we could to prevent it, but were overpowered by the multitude. God continued to draw me with strong desires, and I spent much time in praying in the fields, woods, and barns. Any place and every place was now a closet to my mourning soul, who longed for the day star to arise in my poor benighted heart. And it pleased infinite mercy, while I was praying in a dark place, (greatly terrified for fear I should see the devil,) to set my weary soul at liberty. The next day the Lord was pleased to withdraw the ecstasy of joy, though I had no condemnation, and I had well nigh given up my confidence, thinking it was nothing but a heated imagination. But the Lord met me again, while I was in the fields, my usual place of retirement, and from that time I was enabled to keep a weak hold of the precious Lord Jesus.

When I was about eighteen, I had a desire to see Newcastle-upon-Tyne: thinking, if I was among more experienced Christians, I might be taught the ways of the Lord more perfectly. I stayed a few months there, and boarded with our worthy friend, Mr. Robert Carr, whose tenderness for my youth, and truly Christian behaviour,

was of singular use to me : for which I shall ever love and esteem him. By attending preaching, night and morning, and conversing with many mature Christians, my understanding was much enlightened ; and I think I may say, through all-sufficient mercy, that I grew in the fear and knowledge of God. When I returned to Barnard Castle, I stayed some time there, and told my beloved friends all I could remember of the many excellent sermons I had heard in Newcastle, the nature of their discipline, and the Christian spirit of the society in that place.

Having profited so much by my Newcastle journey, I thought I would take one more journey to Leeds, and after that meant to settle at home for life. Accordingly I went, and here Providence was equally kind in casting my lot in Mr. Richard Watkinson's family ; where they put themselves to some inconvenience in boarding and accommodating me with a very agreeable lodging. I have often had a thankful remembrance of their kindness to me, and I hope the Lord will reward them for it. My business now was that of stuff-making, and as I loved to labour hard, I was enabled to procure more than my necessities required. My method was, as formerly, to be much in the fields, praying and meditating. I also attended all the means of grace, and on the Sabbath I frequently took a walk with Mr. Watkinson into the country, where he preached. During this period, I can truly say I walked in the fear of the Lord and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost ; and my delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law I meditated day and night.

About this time a sudden impression was made upon my mind, that I ought to preach the Gospel. I concluded it was nothing but a temptation, and would not for a moment encourage such a thought. But it came again, and with it "a horror of great darkness fell upon me," like that mentioned in Gen. xv, 12 ; and I was truly miserable. I remembered the wormwood and the gall that the preachers drank at Barnard Castle ; and I said in my heart, I will not preach. But the terrors of the Lord made me afraid, and his fear took hold upon me. I was in great bitterness of spirit, because of this conviction. Sometimes I thought

it was from God, at other times I thought it was all from the devil. In this perplexed situation I continued some time, without ever mentioning my case to any one. I would frequently retire into my closet, and express myself in words like these: "Lord! of what use is my existence in this world? I am profitable neither to God nor man. I cannot preach, for I am a fool, and a child. O let me die, for it is better for me to die than to live." However, I was willing to preach, provided I was sure it was the will of God concerning me. But

"This way and that, I turn'd my anxious mind,"

when a friend of mine, one John Smith, told me of a poor woman in the society who was supposed to be dying, and that she was wonderfully happy. I had read in your tracts the accounts of many happy deaths, but had never seen one. I desired my friend, if he could, to introduce me to see her. He promised to call on me the next night. He did so, and as we were going, I prayed to the Lord that he would remove my intolerable load, and that if it was his will I should preach, he would show it to the dying saint I was about to visit. I said, "Lord, thou canst as easily do this, as thou canst cause her to triumph over death. If thou wilt but show me a token by which I may know thy will, then I will preach thy word wherever thou shalt please to send me." We came to the house where the sick woman lay, and as I was an entire stranger to her and every body besides, I stood at a distance. Mr. Shent came in and prayed with her; I followed him to tell him our Barnard Castle brethren would be glad of a visit from him. After I had delivered my message, I returned to the sick woman; and was told she had made much inquiry for the young man who stood in the corner. I came to the bedside, and she looked me earnestly in the face, and said, "God has called you to preach the Gospel; and you have long rejected the call; but he will make you go; obey the call, obey the call!" She put such an emphasis upon, "he will make you go," that it shocked me exceedingly.

I now resolved, through the grace of God, to make a trial. Accordingly I sent word to Bramley, that preaching would be there the next Lord's day in the morning.

As I went along my mind was perfectly resigned. I did not think about what I should say, but my heart said, "If he will have me to preach, something will be given me to say that will be profitable; and if he has not sent me, it will be a less cross to be confounded before the people, than to be a preacher of the Gospel." I was rather behind the time, and the people were waiting, expecting brother Watkinson, as usual. They came to me, and asked where he was, and what must be done? I said in my heart, "The Lord will provide himself a sacrifice." I stepped to the place, gave out a hymn, prayed, and took these words for my text, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." The people trembled for fear of me, and prayed heartily. God was pleased to visit us; two persons received a sense of pardon. I preached again at noon, and at Armley in the evening. This, dear sir, was my beginning, and what I looked upon as my call from God.

I was now occasionally employed by Mr. Shent, and the other preachers, to take part of a circuit for them. In 1754 brother Mitchell desired me to come and help them in the Staffordshire circuit for a few months. Accordingly I went to Birmingham, Wednesbury, &c. Brother Crab was then along with us, and as we were too many for the few places about Birmingham, I made an excursion into the wilds of Derbyshire; preaching at Wootton, near Weaver-hill, the Ford, Snelson, and Ashburn, where there had been no such a being as a Methodist preacher. I had often found a great desire to preach in that town, but was at a loss how to introduce myself. However, I providentially heard of a serious man, Mr. Thomas Thompson, who kept the tollgate, about half a mile from the town. I took Thomas White with me, from Barton-Forge; we came to Mr. Thompson's, and introduced ourselves in the best manner we could. He informed a few of his neighbours that there was a preacher at his house. Accordingly, Mr. Hurd's family, Mr. Peach's, and a few others, came in the evening; I suppose as many as they durst invite. I talked to them, and expounded a part of the eighth chapter of the Romans. I found much liberty in my own soul, and the power of God rested upon the people, who were deeply affected.

I stayed a few days, preaching morning and evening to as many as the house would hold. Miss Beresford condescended to assemble with us, and the Lord opened her heart, as the heart of Lydia. When I had been preaching Christ as a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, she cried out, "O precious Gospel! O precious Gospel!" From that time she continued steadfast, growing in grace, till the Lord took her in glorious triumph to himself.

I left Ashburn, for about a fortnight, to visit my new friends in Snelson, Wootton, the Ford, Bottom-House, &c., and returned again. I now found I must preach no more at the tollgate house, the commissioners of the road had forbid my friend Mr. Thompson to admit me. But Mr. Hurd, a gentleman farmer, by the desire of his family, whose hearts the Lord had touched, suffered me to preach at his house. It was now that a furious mob arose while I was preaching, and sprang in among us like so many lions. I soon perceived that I was the object of their rage. My mind was variously agitated; yet I durst not but cry aloud, as long as I could be heard, but at last I was overpowered with noise. Some of my friends, in defending me, were bleeding among the mob, and with difficulty I escaped out of their hands. But, as Mr. Thompson, Mr. Isaac Peach, Mr. Hind's family, Miss Beresford, and a few others, remained steady, I was constrained to repeat my visits till the Lord gave us peace. Mr. Thompson grew in the knowledge and love of God till the Lord took him to himself.

In a few weeks I returned again to Leek, and put up at one of the principal inns, in hope of seeing some of the society, to encourage them to suffer patiently for the sake of Him who suffered death for them. I had ordered dinner; but before it was ready the mob collected together in a large body, and beset the inn. The landlord came to me in great confusion, and entreated me to leave the place immediately, or his house would be pulled down, and I should be murdered. I was obliged to obey; I mounted my horse in the yard, and rode through the mob amid stones, dirt, &c., while they were gathering in vast numbers from every part of the town, crying, "Kill him, kill him." There was from this time no access to Leek till

the chief men of this mob died miserably ; and of the rest some went for soldiers, and all of them were dispersed except one man, who was alive a few months ago, in miserable circumstances.

I had frequently passed through Burton-upon-Trent, in my way to Ashby-de-la-Zouch ; and found a desire to preach in that place, which appeared to be fit for Him who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I obtained leave to preach in a large house belonging to a shoemaker. Many attended, and I had reason to believe some were awakened. I gave out preaching for another day, and went accordingly. The town was alarmed, and a mob (as I understood afterward) were hired and made drunk by the principal persons in the town effectually to prevent my preaching. It was in the winter season, and a dark night. All was quiet till I gave out a hymn. Then they approached the house : broke first the window shutters, and then dashed the windows in. The head of this mob was a forgerman, half an idiot, who had bound himself, under an oath, he would that night have my liver. He brought the pipe of a large bellows, with which he made a frightful noise, and which was to be the instrument of my death. He made what way he could to me, but was rather retarded by the multitude that was before him. I observed him with the fury of a fiend ; but knew not well what to do. To attempt to preach was in vain, for I could not be heard. I stepped off the chair, and got into a chamber unperceived by my enemy.— When he found I was gone, he insisted upon going up stairs, and it was impossible to hinder him, and the numbers that were with him. It came into my mind, “Go down stairs ; escape for thy life.” I went down and walked into the shoemaker’s shop, unobserved by any one, though I passed through part of the mob. Soon after he got up stairs, searched the closets, beds, chests, &c.. and when he could not find me, foamed at the mouth like a mad dog. Then there was a cry in the street, “He is in the shop ; he’s in the shop.” I now concluded all was over with me, and said, “Lord, give me strength to suffer as a Christian ; nor may I count my life dear unto myself for thy sake.” I went under the shoemaker’s cutting board ; meantime the mob were not long in breaking open two

strong doors that led into the shop. They did not see me; but one of them put down his hand where I was, and cried out, "He is here; he's here." I had now no other means to use; so I committed myself into their hands. They hurried me into the house, and a very stout man, one of those who had been made drunk for the purpose, approached me: but his countenance fell; he took hold of my hand, and said, "Follow me." I imagined he intended to take me, and throw me into the river, and I was content. I committed myself to the disposal of a kind Providence, expecting nothing but death. With difficulty he got me through the mob; and, as he was one of the best boxers in the town, nobody durst oppose him. When we came to the door, he drew me short by the corner up a narrow street, put me before him, and said, "Run." I made my way to the fields, and he kept behind, keeping the rest off, then helping me over walls and hedges, till we had lost them all. I remained in the fields till midnight, and returned with a friend into town, and lodged till early in the morning, when I rode away.

After some time I went again to Leek, stayed ten days, and joined twenty-four in a society. A lawyer then raised a furious mob, who beset the house where I lodged. My few friends kept them off for a considerable time. But at last they lost all patience: they broke in, and were determined to drag me away: but it pleased the Lord that a woman, who then neither feared God, nor regarded man, opened a window that looked into the yard, and desired me to come into her house. Here I stayed till about two o'clock in the morning, and then made my escape over the mountains to the Bottom-House. This woman is yet alive: but she is a new woman and in our society. The next day the mob were not a little chagrined to find they had lost their prey: and had no other way to avenge themselves than to burn me in effigy.

Soon after I was pressed in spirit to visit Burton-upon-Trent once more. The mob soon gathered: and had it not been for a peculiar providence, in turning one of the head of them on my side, I believe I should have had that night the honour of martyrdom.

In weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in joy and sorrow, in weakness and trembling, were my days

now spent. And I have frequently thought if God would excuse me from this hard task, how gladly should I embrace the life of a shoeblick, or of a shepherd's boy. I was surrounded with death, and could seldom expect to survive another day, because of the fury of the people.—And yet it was, “Wo unto thee, if thou preach not the Gospel.”

The summer following, 1755, the conference was held at Leeds, where I was admitted as a travelling preacher. The next year I was sent to Canterbury. My little stock of money was nearly exhausted by the time I got to London; and, though it was rather too long a journey for a winter's day, I was under a necessity to push forward, not having money enough to keep me and my horse upon the road all night. It was about eight o'clock at night when I got within sight of the lamps in the city. Two men, with large pistols, then rushed out upon me from a narrow lane, and demanded my money. They took my watch, and all the money I had in the world, which was two shillings and eight pence. (Indeed sometimes, if a half penny would have purchased the three kingdoms, I had it not for weeks together.) I believe this robbery was permitted for good. It was at the time we expected an invasion from France, and the city of Canterbury was full of soldiers. They were two soldiers who robbed me, and this excited a curiosity in their comrades to hear the preacher who had been robbed: and it pleased God to convince many of them. About ten were in society before this; and when I came away, they were increased to sixty.

Several of the following years I spent in Scotland.—And I think this was, in general, the happiest period in my life. In 1763 brother Roberts and I came to Dundee. I preached in the evening, and he the next morning, when we parted. I came to Edinburgh, and he went to Aberdeen. Some time after I had a strong desire to give Dundee a fair trial. Accordingly I went there, and stayed three or four months. I continued preaching in the open air till the tenth of November. And it was there God met with many poor sinners, and truly awakened them to a sense of their misery. So that before I left the place, there were near a hundred joined in our society. About this time Mr. Erskine published Mr. Hervey's letters, with a preface

equally bitter. O the precious convictions those letters destroyed! They made me mourn in secret places. Mr. Erskine being much esteemed in the religious world, and recommending them through the whole kingdom, our enemies made their advantage of them. These made the Lady Gardiner leave us, after expressing a thousand times, in my hearing, the great profit she received by hearing our preaching. Many were then brought to the birth, but by those letters their convictions were stifled. What a pity good men should help to destroy the real work of God in the hearts of men!

In 1765 I was appointed to labour in the Leeds circuit. Here the Lord was pleased to try me by the death of a most amiable wife and my only child. O how great a debtor to that grace which forbids our murmuring at the dispensations of Providence, though it allows us to sorrow, but not as men without hope!

In 1766 I laboured in the Bristol circuit. In 1767, in Staffordshire. In 1768, in Bedfordshire. In 1769, and 1770, in Newcastle. In 1771, in Edinburgh and Glasgow. From hence I made a short visit to my old friends at Dundee; and, notwithstanding the many difficulties they had to encounter, I found many of them serious and steady. In 1772 and 1773 I laboured in Staffordshire again. In 1774 and 1775, in Gloucestershire. In 1776 and 1777, in Macclesfield. There the Lord was pleased again to afflict me in a very tender part, by making a second breach in my family.

Our lives are ever in the power of death.

In 1778 I was appointed for Liverpool. I am now going on in my second year, among a loving, kind, and good people, for whom I feel the greatest affection, and hope my weak labours are acceptable.

Thus, dear sir, I have given you a short account of my life; but fain I would do something for Him who has loved me, and given himself for me. My sentiments in religion are the same they ever were. I believe man, by nature, is sinful and helpless. That his only remedy is in Jesus Christ, who tasted death for every man. That the Holy Spirit works conversion in the soul, and a fitness for the kingdom of heaven, by transforming it into the image

of the ever blessed God. This conformity I most ardently long for ; and hope, dear sir, you will entreat the Father of mercies for your affectionate son and servant in the Gospel,

THOMAS HANBY.

Liverpool, Nov. 12, 1779.

MR. THOMAS LEE.

I WAS born in May, 1717, at a small village in the parish of Kighley, Yorkshire. When I was four years old my mother died, and I was removed to her brother's, at Long-Addingham. Here I was carefully restrained from outward sin : yet I often felt an inclination to it ; particularly to swear, which one day I did : but, blessed be God, he struck me with so deep a conviction that I never swore again from that day, nor had the least inclination to it.—About fourteen I was bound apprentice to one of the worsted trade, and was by a kind Providence placed in a family where I wanted nothing that was needful either for body or soul. From my early days the Lord was at times powerfully working upon my soul. From ten or eleven years of age I was exceedingly distressed. I generally saw, as I thought, hell before me, and believed it was to be my portion. The words everlasting and eternity were much upon my mind, insomuch that my life became a burden to me. For, on the other hand, hell appeared intolerable, and, on the other, I found no delight in the service of God, so that my days were consumed in trouble. Frequently did I murmur against God and often wished to be annihilated.

In this state I continued till I was fourteen, though with some intervals. I was then a little more at ease, and followed what are called recreations. But from fifteen I was more inclined to reading, and for some time spent all my vacant hours in reading the Scripture, and took much

pleasure therein. Between sixteen and seventeen I found much delight in prayer, and had many inward consolations, though I had never then heard any one speak of the comforts of the Holy Ghost. But having none to speak to about these things, they gradually died away. From seventeen to nineteen was the most careless part of my life. I now sought pleasure in mirth and company. But the Lord generally disappointed me, and made it bitter to my soul. I could not find any companions to my mind. I sought mirth : but I thought they carried it to excess.— And I could not bear their taking the name of God in vain. Hence I had much sorrow at times : likewise the looking back, and seeing what seriousness I had fallen from, cut me to the heart.

During this time I now and then heard that blessed man, Mr. Grimshaw, and made good resolutions ; but they lasted not long. Meanwhile I had heard of a people called Methodists : but I was little concerned about them, till I heard some of them preach. I liked them well, and heard them more and more frequently. And though I was not deeply affected under any particular sermon, yet my conscience was gradually enlightened by hearing and reading, and conversing and praying, till I resolved to cast in my lot among them. From that time my heart was so united to them that, all at once, I dropped all my former companions. And, blessed be God, from that hour I have never had one desire to turn back.

I now loved the Bible more than ever, particularly the New Testament. This was my daily companion ; and in reading and meditating therein I found great delight. And hereby I was delivered from a temptation to think, “ These are the false prophets we are bid to beware of.” This vanished away when I compared their doctrines and practice with my Bible. And my judgment was more fully and clearly informed of all the essential doctrines of Christianity. And in the use of these means God frequently met me, and comforted my soul. Indeed the doctrine of salvation by grace was unspeakably comfortable to me. Yet, shortly after, I sunk almost all at once into a desponding state, which continued more than a year. And though during this time I was often comforted, both under the word and in prayer, yet I do not remember passing four and

twenty hours together without being some part of the time in despair. In this period I was continually tempted to think myself a hypocrite. Once I mentioned this to a friend, but got no comfort at all, which shut my mouth for a long time. It is impossible to express the anguish I felt. I longed for death, though I knew I was not fit for it. But in the midst of all, I constantly heard the preaching at all opportunities, and never omitted prayer. When I could say nothing, I groaned before God; resolving, if I perished, (as I expected to do,) it should be in the means of grace. Yet even in this period the Lord did not leave me. As I was one night on my knees groaning before him, these words were powerfully applied to my soul, "Thou shalt bear my name before much people." And this impression never after left my mind long together, which often constrained me to hope that the Lord would some time help me. Also during all this time I had favour with my master and mistress, and all the family; although they did not much like the people to whom I belonged. Toward the end of this gloomy season, one evening; when sitting in the house, I took courage, rose up, and desired we might have family prayer. I kneeled down (and so did all the family) and prayed with great freedom. And I continued it, though only an apprentice, which proved a great blessing to my own soul; for it kept me watchful all the day long, lest my prayer and my life should contradict each other. Soon after I was desired to pray in another family, which I did several times. I had now more hope: and one day being alone great part of the day, and much engaged in meditation and prayer, I found a persuasion that God was willing to receive me. I left my business immediately, and went to prayer. In a moment God broke in upon my soul in so wonderful a manner, that I could no longer doubt of his forgiving love. I cried, "My Lord and my God!" And in the spirit I was then in, I could have praised, and loved, and waited to all eternity.

Before this, I had attended several meetings for prayer. I was now unawares brought to conduct those meetings, and sometimes to speak a few words in His name whom I loved. When the meetings were over, others asked me to come to their houses, which I promised to do. But

when I came home I feared I had gone too far, and resolved to make no more such promises. One night as I was going to a neighbour's house, one of my master's daughters, who was going with me, said, "My father and mother not pleased with your proceedings." I asked, "Why, what have I done!" She said, "They would not have you go to such houses. But if you think it is your duty to keep meetings in the neighbourhood, they would have you keep them at home." That night my soul was greatly comforted, and I gave notice of speaking at home on Sunday evening. We had abundance of people, and neither my master nor mistress seemed to be at all displeased. They loved me dearly, and let me go wherever I would. But in the midst of all these outward blessings I had many inward trials. Sometimes I doubted my state; sometimes I feared I had run before I was sent, and many times said, with Jeremiah, *I will speak no more in this name.* And thus I continued for several months, though many were blessed and comforted in hearing me. Frequently I consulted my dear friend, Mr. Grimshaw, who strongly exhorted me "not to be faint or weary, but to go on valiantly in the work to which God had called me."

About this time I was invited to go to Harding Moor, Lingobin near Wilsdon, and Thornton, above Bradforth. As these were places where no one had preached yet, I thought if God would own me here, and raise up a people for himself, I shall know that he hath sent me. He did so: many found peace with God, and a society was raised at each place. After delivering the seup to the travelling preachers, I went to Long-Addingham. There also God was pleased to set to his seal. A society was quickly raised. Many sinners were convinced, and several of them truly converted to God. During all this time I wrought exceedingly hard at my own business when I was at home: but the going up and down to preach frequently took up more than half my time. After awhile Providence called me to Greenough-Hill, to Hartwith, and some other places; at each of which it pleased God to raise up a people for himself. After I had preached some time at Greenough-Hill, I was invited to Pateley-Bridge. Here I was called to an exercise of my faith which I

had not hitherto known. The first time I was there, Mr. — had prepared and encouraged a numerous mob, who spared neither mud nor stones, with many strokes beside, so that they themselves owned, "We have done enough to make an end of him." I did indeed reel to and fro, and my head was broke with a stone. But I never found my soul more happy, nor was ever more composed in my closet. It was a glorious time; and there are several who date their conversion from that day. After I was a little cleaned, I went to a neighbouring town, where, when my head was dressed, I preached abroad to abundance of people, many of whom had followed me from Pateley-Bridge. Some of the mob also followed, but as the wretched minister was not present to head them, and as they were greatly outnumbered, they behaved peaceably. And the Lord blessed us much.

Having now laboured near four years, and travelled generally on foot; having been often thoroughly wet, and obliged to keep on my wet clothes all day: and having frequently, when at home, worked at night, that I might not be burdensome to any; I found I was not so strong as formerly. And the number of places still increasing, I was obliged, though much against my will, to give up my business and to buy a horse. Mr. Grimshaw now sent me into his circuit for a month, sending another preacher in my place. Then I returned, and spent a considerable time together among the new societies.

In the year 1752, and during the winter following, the work of God prospered exceedingly; but persecution raged on every side. The malice of the devil was chiefly levelled against me, as I was the first that disturbed his servants in these parts. So that wherever I went I was in much danger, carrying as it were my life in my hand. One day as I was going through Pateley, the captain of the mob, who was kept in constant pay, pursued me and pulled me off my horse. The mob then soon collected about me: and one or other struck up my heels (I believe more than twenty times) upon the stones. They then dragged me into a house by the hair of the head; then pushed me back, with one or two upon me, and threw me with the small of my back upon the edge of the

stone stairs. This nearly broke my back, and it was not well for many years after. Thence they dragged me down the common sewer, which carries the dirt from the town to the river. They rolled me in it for some time; then dragged me to the bridge and threw me into the water. They had me mostly on the ground, my strength being quite spent.

My wife, with some friends, now came up. Seeing her busy about me, some asked, "What, are you a Methodist?" gave her several blows, which made her bleed at the mouth, and swore they would put her into the river. All this time I lay upon the ground, the mob being undetermined what to do: some cried out, "Make an end of him." Others were for sparing my life; but the dispute was cut short by their agreeing to put some others into the water. So they took them away, leaving me and my wife together. She endeavoured to raise me up; but having no strength, I dropped down to the ground again. She got me up again, and supported me about a hundred yards; then I was set on horseback, and made a shift to ride softly as far as Michael Granger's house. Here I was stripped from head to foot, and was washed. I left my wet clothes here, and rode to Greenough-Hill, where many were waiting for me: and though much bruised and very weak, preached a short sermon from Psalm xxxiv, 19: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." The next morning I preached again. Afterward several accompanied me a byway to North-Pasture. There were many serious hearers; but the captain of the mob came, and made some disturbance: and then with a great stick broke every pane of glass in a large window. This made a little confusion at first; but afterward the Lord poured down his blessing in an uncommon manner. Almost all were in tears, and the people *took joyfully the spoiling of their goods*. Thence we rode to Hartwith, where we had peace, and the power of the Lord was with us. But when the work of the day was over, I was so bruised and sore that I was obliged to be undressed by another.

This summer, autumn, and winter were times of hot persecution. Our friends frequently suffered when they

went upon business to Pateley-Bridge. Their clothes were spoiled, and their persons much abused. They applied for justice to the dean of Rippon, but found none. But what made amends was, we loved each other dearly, and had exceeding comfortable seasons together. In January I was invited to preach about a mile from Pateley. When I came, the mob was gathered. However, in the name of the Lord I began: and though they blasphemed horribly, and broke the windows, I was not interrupted or discomposed, but prayed, preached, and concluded in peace. As soon as I had ended, they became outrageous. I retired into a chamber, and gave myself to prayer. While I was on my knees, one came and informed me the mob had forced into the house, and would quickly be in the chamber; but that I must get out at the window, and there were some friends below who would catch me as I fell. I did so, and went where I had left my mare. Thus the Lord delivered me this time also. In awhile, being desired to preach there again, I fixed it in the day time, thinking the mob would not leave their work to disturb us. But they soon came and surrounded the house, so that I could not preach at all. After I had been kept prisoner for several hours, I was obliged to run for my life. About the same time I was invited to Garthit-Hall, where I preached in the open air with little interruption: but when I went again, the Pateley mob came, though the floods were out. When I began to preach, they were more and more violent, till I was forced to desist and retire. Being resolved that I should not escape again, they surrounded the house till near sunset: then they ran to beat one of the people. Our friends snatched the opportunity, and brought me a horse, which I immediately mounted. The mob, seeing this, left him and pursued me. But again God delivered me out of their hands. But hearing I was to preach some miles off, on the other side of the water, they immediately divided (it being a great flood) to the different bridges. This obliged us to ride many miles about. It being very dark, we lost our way upon the moors. We wandered till we were thoroughly wet with snow and rain; but late at night found our way to Thomas Lupton's. The congregation had waited for several hours, being in much trouble for

fear I was killed. I changed my clothes, and though it was late, preached to them as the Lord enabled me. It seemed to us as little less than heaven: and though it was a hard day, it was a blessed day to my soul.

I remember once, during these seasons of trouble, wherein my life continually hung in suspense, a thought came into my mind, "'Tis hard to have no respite, to be thus perpetually suffering." Immediately it was impressed upon my mind, "Did you not, when you were on the borders of despair, promise the Lord that, if he would give you assurance of his favour, you would count no suffering, sorrow, or affliction, too great to be endured for his name's sake?" This at once silenced all murmuring, and thenceforth I bore whatever befell me with patience, and often with joy: finding a willingness to bear it as long as he saw meet, if it were to the end of my life.

About this time I had thirteen or fourteen places where I preached regularly. And I thought only of spending my life among them, when Mr. Grimshaw mentioned me to you. You sent for me, and asked, "Whether I was willing to be a travelling preacher?" I said, "Yes, if Mr. Grimshaw would supply my places:" which he promised to do. That year I was most in the Birstal and Leeds circuits: the next in the Leeds circuit altogether, which then comprehended Sheffield and York also, extending into Derbyshire on the south, to Hull on the east, and on the north as far as Newton under Rosebury-topping.

In the year 1758, I was stationed in Lincolnshire. The whole country, now divided into three, was then only in one circuit. So I spent two months in the eastern part, and then two months in the western. I was in this circuit about sixteen months in all: and I did not labour in vain. There was a very considerable increase in the societies, and many souls were brought to a saving knowledge of God. And though the rides were long, and the work was hard, yet all was made easy and comfortable. The Lord was greatly with us, and the people in general were loving and teachable: and I know not if I shall ever love a people better on this side eternity. Thence I removed into Newcastle circuit, which then included Edinburgh,

to which we went, and back again in a fortnight, generally preaching night and morning. I found many trials in this circuit, but the Lord delivered me out of all. The next year I was in the Manchester round, which then contained Lancashire, Cheshire, part of Shropshire and of Wales, Staffordshire, and part of Derbyshire. Our labour was hard; but we saw much fruit of it, particularly at Manchester and Bolton. In the latter part of the year I was generally supposed to be far gone in a consumption: I was not careful about it, not doubting but if the Lord called me, I should finish my course with joy. But it pleased God to restore my health and strength. May I still glorify him with my body and my spirit.

After some years I went (accompanied with my wife) to Edinburgh. Mr. Hopper laboured with me. It was now Dr. Erskine published and recommended the eleven letters ascribed to Mr. Hervey. This occasioned a good deal of reproach for a time: after which I was called away to Newcastle. The weather was very severe. Day after day we had various storms, and were hardly able to preserve life. But the worst was, when we came to the steep descent from the mountains (called the Peas) where the hill had fallen into the deep road, and made it utterly impassable. This obliged us to creep along a path like a sheep track, hanging over a deep vale. Meantime the snow and wind beat so furiously upon us, that we knew not if we should escape with life. After lodging at old Cammus, (a most uncomfortable inn,) we went forward through sharp frost, heavy snow beating upon us, and miserable roads to Alnwick. From thence to Morpeth we had fair weather, but the next day was heavy rain, which attended us all the way to Newcastle. And here I remained fully employed till the Manchester conference.

In 1760 I was stationed at Epworth once more. This winter we were invited to Newark-upon-Trent. But we met with much opposition from riotous mobs, encouraged by great men. On the 24th of March they took the pulpit out of the preaching house, and burned it in the market place. I went thither on the 7th of April, with Mr. and Mrs. Pool of North Searle. The preaching was to begin at two o'clock; but a large mob was there before I began. I prayed, and preached a short sermon. Toward the lat-

ter end of the discourse, they threw a large quantity of eggs, filled with blood and sealed with pitch, which made strange work wherever they alighted. When they had discharged these, they grew more outrageous still. We judged it best to send to the mayor. But instead of coming to quell the riot, he sent an order for me to appear before him. In our way to the main street there was a deep muddy drain. They attempted to push me into it; but I caught hold of one of the mob, and held him so fast, that they could not push in one without the other. When we came to the mayor's he sent for the town clerk. I showed them the act of toleration, and the certificate of my license, observing I had done nothing which was not warranted by law. After much conversation, our friends gave evidence against three of the rioters, who were bound over to the assizes. Some thousands of the mob being gathered in the streets, I requested the mayor to send an officer to guard me through them. He said he would go himself. And he did go to the gate; but when I was gone out, immediately went back. I was presently surrounded; and they soon began to throw mire, clods of earth, and stone in abundance. This they continued to do all down the street, till we came to the preaching house. Our friends, judging there would be no safety there, brought my great coat into the stable, and advised me to mount and gallop through the mob, which I purposed to do. Accordingly I mounted, but some of them held the gate, and others beat both me and my mare in so violent a manner, that I thought it would be best to dismount and go the back way. But here also the mob met me, beat both me and the mare, and when I endeavoured to mount, pulled me back, and the mare got from me. Then they dragged me along, sometimes on my feet, and sometimes on the ground, to the side of the Trent, swearing they would throw me in. But they were not agreed in this, so they brought water, and poured it upon me from head to foot. A painter then came with his pot and brush, and laid it on plentifully. They still surrounded me, throwing dirt and beating me till I could hardly stir. Then they offered to let me go, if I would promise never to come again. But this I could not do. Just then a man came cursing, swearing, and threaten-

ing, offended, it seemed, at their proceedings : at which most of them left me and dispersed. I rose up, and walked as well as I could down the marsh, a few of the mob quietly walking with me. I found my mare in a standing water : I went in, took her, and rode off. Coming to a pond, I alighted, washed myself a little, and then went on to North Searle : but it was hard work, as the night came on, and I was very wet, and exceeding cold. When I got there, I procured some dry clothes, and the Lord gave me a quiet night. The next day I was very sore and weak ; however I sat up most of the day, and in a little time I recovered my strength, and had still more cause to trust and praise God.

On July 16th was our trial at Nottingham. But the grand jury, sparing the rioters all they could, would not find the bill for *disturbing me at public worship*, but only for *assaulting* me. They were accordingly bound over to be tried for the assault, at the next assizes. Meantime an innumerable mob was collected, both within and without the court, threatening what they would do to me. I therefore addressed the recorder for a guard. He immediately ordered two constables to conduct me safe to my lodging : the mob roared ; but durst go no farther. So I returned home unmolested. At the following assizes several of the rioters were indicted : judges' warrants were issued out and executed. In October my counsel and recorder agreed (to prevent all farther trouble) what each offender should pay, after making submission and promising to offend no more. The recorder then gave them a very pertinent exhortation, and hearing the Nottingham mob was collected again, sent two constables to guard me to my lodgings, and ordered them to give the people notice that if any man offered to assault me he would immediately send him to prison. Thus ended the troublesome affair at Newark. Since then the work of God has prospered greatly. And a convenient preaching house has been built, in which numerous congregations meet without any disturbance.

Thus have I given you a few imperfect hints of the manner wherein our Lord has dealt with me. My whole life, particularly since I have known something of the saving power of religion, has been attended all along with

manifold trials, a thousand times more than I have related : yet has the Lord been exceedingly gracious to me, the most unworthy of all his people. If I this moment saw all the sufferings I have had for his name's sake ; if they were now spread before me, I would say, " Lord, if thou wilt give me strength, I will now begin again, and thou shalt add to them lions' dens and fiery furnaces, and by thy grace I will go through them all." My life, though attended with many crosses, has been a life of mercies. For more than twenty years I have rarely preached the controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians. But my judgment is fixed : I have no doubt either of Christ's " tasting death for every man," or of his being able and willing " to save to the uttermost " all that come unto God through him. I count it one of the greatest favours that he still allows me to do a little for him, and that he in any measure owns the little which I am able to speak in his name. I beg I may be humble at his feet all the days of my life, and may be more and more like him whom my soul loveth, till at last I reign with him in glory !

I am, dear sir, your willing, though unworthy servant
in the Gospel,

THOMAS LEE.

October 30, 1779.

MR. GEORGE STORY.

I was born in the year 1738, at Harthill, in the West-Riding of Yorkshire. At four years of age I had learned the catechism, and had repeated it before the minister, in the church. About that time I had a narrow escape ; being near the edge of a deep pond, my foot slipped, and I plunged in, but recovering myself, I struggled to the side, and laying hold of some weeds, got out, no one being near that could give me any assistance. In the sixth year I had read the Bible through several times, and other books that came in my way ; particularly the history of the sufferings of the Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont ; which fixed in me an aversion to the princi-

ples of the Church of Rome. Among the practical treatises in this history was a caveat against dancing, wherein was asserted that "every step a dancer takes, is a step toward hell." This so affected me that no inducement could ever prevail upon me to attend the dancing school; which I esteem a singular mercy, as it prevented connections that might have proved very pernicious. One day I wantonly threw a stone, and killed a young bird belonging to a neighbour. Though no one saw me, yet for several nights I had little sleep. The idea of the bird's expiring in agonies, through my wickedness, filled me with inexpressible anguish. I would have given a great deal to have restored the little creature to life. Tears and prayers to God for pardon, and promises to offend him thus no more, was the only way wherein I found relief.

My parents taught me early to fear the Lord, as far as they knew; and though their instructions were tedious and irksome, yet they made an impression on my mind that was never lost, but often recurred when I was alone, or in places of temptation. Our minister was a pious, venerable man, and performed his duty with a solemnity that often struck me with awe of the Divine presence; particularly when he was reading the burial service, I frequently had a distant prospect of judgment and eternity. I was agreeably affected with thunder and lightning. It filled me with a sense of God's majesty and power; for which reason I would get in the midst of it, though ever so dreadful, if I was not prevented, that I might enjoy the whole report and see the full blaze.

In my seventh year I lost all relish for learning, and contracted several evil habits. The two following years my time at school was spent to little purpose: part of this I attribute to the being too early taught to read, and too close application to it; and part to the want of a proper master, who could suit my genius and engage my curiosity for useful knowledge. But my master dying, and being succeeded by one whose ability and method were adapted to my capacity, I soon recovered my thirst for learning, and made considerable improvement therein.—Before I was well able to carry a gun I was fond of shooting; till being out one day in the fields, my gun went off

at half cock, and was within very little of killing my brother ; this filled me with such horror that I could not endure that exercise any more.

When I was about ten years of age, God began to revive his work of grace in and about Sheffield ; the rumour of which spread into our village, and occasioned serious reflections in the minds of many. One evening, as I was hearkening to the conversation of my parents on that subject, I was struck with an observation they made, that prayer was nothing unless the mind was stayed on God. At night, when I repeated my customary prayers, I watched my thoughts narrowly, and soon found that they wandered from the Lord all the time. This discovery deeply affected me ; I strove with all my might to think on God as being present, seeing and hearing me ; and after repeated efforts, through grace, I prevailed. I now began to delight in duties ; to pray fervently and feelingly, with or without a form ; and many times the Lord answered me in such a manner as clearly convinced me of his omniscience and omnipresence. I read the Bible with pleasure and profit : the sufferings of Christ filled me with wonder and gratitude, as I now understood that he endured them all for my sins, and to save my soul from eternal destruction. Reading in the thirty-nine articles that justification was by faith, I endeavoured to cast my soul upon the Lord in the best manner I was able, and at times was persuaded that he had forgiven all my trespasses.— Though I had never heard any of the Methodist preachers, yet from that time I felt an esteem for them ; and notwithstanding they were loaded with all manner of reproach, and represented in the most detestable light, those calumnies only increased my regard for them, because I understood that true Christians, in all former ages, had met with the same treatment from the world.

Having acquired all the learning that was taught at a country school, my friends began to think of putting me to some business. Going one day to a bookseller's shop, in a neighbouring market town, I got acquainted with him, and my friends accepting of his proposal, I soon after went with him to his place of residence. This introduced me into company, and exposed me to temptations I never knew before ; and yet the Spirit of God strove with me

more than ever : almost every night I was called to a strict account by that inward monitor, and reproved for the faults of the day : and I could seldom sleep till with prayers and tears I had implored mercy, and in some degree obtained it from the Lord : and in this manner I went on for about a year. I had often been perplexed with the doctrine of predestination, but now the tempter drew me insensibly into it ; he continually suggested that if I was to be saved, I certainly should, live as I list ; but if I was ordained to be damned, there was no remedy : God himself could not save me ; and therefore it was mere folly to give myself so much concern about it. But although these suggestions tended to stupify my conscience and harden my heart, yet I was more uneasy than ever. The Methodists at that time were few and feeble ; they had seldom any travelling preachers ; I sometimes attended their prayer meetings, and often followed them up and down the town, hoping they would turn and speak to me ; but none took any notice of me. I was left alone to struggle with sin and Satan. One day, hearing a preacher was to be there, I attended ; but he did not come. Upon this, one of the local preachers, who was then a Calvinist, gave an exhortation ; in which he fairly repeated the words that Satan had so often suggested to me : viz., that if we were to be saved, we could not possibly perish ; and if we were to be damned, there was no help for us. This made a deep impression, and confirmed all that the devil had been preaching to me for years. I believed the horrible doctrine, and from that time determined to give myself as little trouble as possible about religion. Being surrounded with books, I read the first that came to hand ; histories, novels, plays, and romances, by dozens ; but they only pleased while my eyes were upon them, and afterward furnished matter for a thousand vain imaginations. I then read the lives of the heathen philosophers with admiration, and determined to copy after them. I perfected myself in geometry and trigonometry ; then I learned M'Auley's short hand ; soon afterward geography and astronomy, together with botany, anatomy, physic, and several branches of natural philosophy. Once I intended studying the law, and read a great deal in the statutes at large, and other law books : but the subject was too dry and unen-

tertaining for one of my desultory disposition. I could recollect reading over three hundred volumes, of one kind or another, (some of them were large folios,) before I was sixteen years old. My passion for books was insatiable. I frequently read till ten or eleven o'clock at night, and began at four or five o'clock in the morning; nor had I patience to eat my meat, unless I had a book before me.

But about this time I was weary of the shop, and entered the printing office. This opened a new scene of things, which pleased me for a season. I was determined to be a complete master of my business, and in about two years was able to accomplish my day's work in six hours, so that I had much time upon my hands for study and recreations. One summer I was an angler, and attended the river early every morning; but this, after a few months' trial, brought me neither pleasure nor profit. The next summer I commenced florist, took a garden, was passionately fond of auriculas, polyanthoses, &c. But this too soon grew insipid: happiness was not to be found in these pursuits. In the midst of my reading I met with some deistical authors; I read and reasoned till the Bible grew not only dull, but, I thought, full of contradictions. I staggered first at the divinity of Christ; and at length gave up the Bible altogether, and sunk into fatalism and deism. This new light promised great satisfaction. I thought myself much wiser than others; but, alas! it soon led into a dreary labyrinth! My ideas of God and religion were quite confounded; I felt the wretchedness of my heart, but could discover no way to escape from it.

About the age of eighteen the management of the printing office fell to my share. I had a weekly newspaper to publish, all the paragraphs to select from the public prints, the advertisements to prepare, the press to correct, and the journeymen and apprentices to superintend. This flattered my vanity, increased my native pride, and consequently led me farther from God. I then sought happiness in card-playing; but, after repeated trials, it appeared such a silly waste of time, and so opposite to common sense, that I was obliged to give it up. Twice or thrice I got into company, and was intoxicated with liquor; but in the midst of this folly I saw its madness, and turned from it with abhorrence. I likewise saw its ruinous con-

sequences in those I was daily surrounded with. However, I hoped a horserace was a more manly and rational amusement : I therefore attended the races, at Doncaster, with the most flattering expectation of the happiness I should find that week. The first day vanished away without any satisfaction : the second was still worse : as I passed through the company, dejected and disappointed, it occurred to my mind, " What is all this immense multitude assembled here for ? To see a few horses gallop two or three times around the course, as if the devil was both in them and their riders ! Certainly we are all mad ; we are fit for bedlam, if we imagine that the Almighty made us for no other purpose but to seek happiness in such senseless amusements !" I was ashamed and confounded, and determined never to be seen there any more.

When I was twenty years old I was glad of the opportunity of seeing London. I went up full of the most sanguine expectation of finding the happiness I was in search of, and therefore lost no time in seeing and hearing every thing new and curious that I could gain access to. But new things quickly grew old, and the repeated sight of them soon proved disgustful. No happiness followed ; but an unaccountable anguish of spirit whenever I attended to the sensations of my own mind. Then I would gladly have travelled into any part of Europe or America, hoping a continual change of scenes would satisfy me. But it was war time, and I could not embark for Holland without a passport from the secretary of state, which I did not know how to procure. At length I resolved to try if religion would afford me any relief. I went to several places of worship, but even this was in vain : there was something dull and disagreeable wherever I turned my eyes, and I knew not that the malady was in myself. At length I found Mr. Whitefield's chapel, in Tottenham-court Road ; and was agreeably entertained with his manner of preaching : his discourses were so engaging that when I retired to my lodgings I wrote down the substance of them in my journal, and frequently read them over with pleasure : but still nothing reached my case, nor had I any light into the state of my soul. Meantime on the week nights I went to the theatres ; nor could I discern any difference between Mr. Whitefield's preaching and a good tragedy.

Being now weary of every thing, and every place being equal to me, (for I carried about with me a mind that was never at rest,) I embraced the invitation of my friends, and returned into the country. I was kindly received, and solicited to enter into business for myself. But, reflecting that I was young and inexperienced, I declined the offer, and engaged with a person to manage his printing office. I was now in an agreeable situation. I wanted for nothing. I had more money than I knew what to do with. Yet, notwithstanding, I was as wretched as I could live, without knowing either the cause of this misery, or any way to escape. I had now for some years attempted to regulate my conduct according to reason; but, alas! I stood condemned in a thousand instances, even at the bar of that partial judge. From my infancy I was exceeding passionate; and this evil grew upon me, and caused bitter reflections on various occasions. I knew that anger was a paroxysm of madness, that it was contrary to reason in every respect; I therefore guarded against it with all my might. Sometimes I conquered; and those transient victories greatly pleased me; but if an unexpected temptation suddenly occurred, all my resolutions were but as a thread of tow before the fire; and my behaviour was more like that of an enraged wild beast than of a rational creature. Sometimes, when among facetious company, I endeavoured to catch their spirit. But in the midst of levity I had a dread upon me. Experience taught me that their laughter was madness. As soon as I returned to sober thoughts I found my feigned mirth left a melancholy upon my mind. And this was succeeded either by storms of passion, or an aversion even to life. During this dark night of apostacy I lost all remembrance of God's former goodness. I wandered to different places of religious worship, but found sufficient matter everywhere to be disgusted; at length I forsook them all, and on Sunday confined myself to my room, or retired to the centre of a neighbouring wood. Here I considered, with the closest attention I was able, the arguments for and against deism. I would gladly have given credit to the Christian revelation, but could not. My reason leaned to the wrong side, and involved me in endless perplexities. I likewise endeavoured to fortify myself with

stronger arguments and firmer resolutions against my evil tempers ; for, since I could not be called a Christian, I wished however to be a good moral heathen. Internal anguish frequently compelled me to supplicate the Divine Being for mercy and truth : I seldom gave over till my heart was melted, and I felt something of God's presence. But I retained those gracious impressions only for a short time.

Being employed in abridging and printing the life of Eugene Aram, who was hung in chains at Knaresborough, for murder, I observed that by intense application he attained to a prodigious knowledge in the sciences and languages. I was so engaged with this account that I determined on the same acquisitions : vainly imagining that as I had the desire, so I had the capacity to learn every thing. While I was musing upon these matters, and fixing the plan for my future proceedings, the following thoughts fastened upon my mind, and broke in pieces all my schemes :—"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. What did this man's wisdom profit him ? It did not save him from being a thief, and a murderer ; no, nor from attempting even his own life. True wisdom is foolishness with men. He that will be wise, must first become a fool, that he may be wise !" I was like a man awakened out of sleep. I was astonished. I felt myself wrong. I was conscious I had been pursuing a vain shadow ; and that God only could direct me into the right path. I therefore applied to him with earnest importunity, entreating him to show me the true way to happiness ; which I was determined to follow, however difficult or dangerous.

Just at this time a work of grace broke out in the village where I was born, through the labours of a person remarkably zealous for the cause of God. My mother, in particular, was deeply convinced of the truth, which she soon experienced, and retained the life and power thereof to her dying day. She was much concerned for me, hoping if I could be brought among religious persons I should likewise soon be convinced. She therefore, by an acquaintance, entreated me to converse with the Methodists. I answered, "If my mother desires it, I will visit them with all my heart." The first time I entered a Me-

thodist's house they went to prayer with me and for me a considerable time. I looked upon them as well meaning, ignorant people, and thought no more about the matter. In a few days they desired I would come and see them again. Considering it was my mother's request, I went without hesitation. I found four or five persons in the house, with whom I disputed about religion for some hours, till I had fairly wearied them. They laboured to convince me that I was a sinner, and in danger of eternal death, if I did not repent and return to God. These were subjects I had no kind of idea of; and as their arguments were only supported by Scripture, for which I had very little regard, all they said made not the least impression. As I was about to withdraw, not a little elevated by my imaginary victory, one of the company desired to ask me a few questions: the first was, "Are you happy?" My countenance instantly fell, and I answered from the dictates of my conscience, "No:" she then inquired if I was not desirous of finding happiness: I replied it had been my pursuit ever since I could remember; that I was willing to obtain it on any terms, and that I had sought for it every way I could think of, but in vain. She then showed me the true way of obtaining the happiness I wanted; assuring me if I sought the Lord with all my heart I should certainly find in him that peace and pleasure which the world could not bestow. Every word sunk deep into my mind; and from that moment I never lost my convictions, nor my resolutions to be truly devoted to God.

I immediately broke off all connection with my companions; threw my useless books into the fire; and sought the Lord with all my might. I soon discovered the importance of the Scriptures; that there was no other revelation of the Divine will to mankind; that I must credit the truths contained therein, however opposite they appeared to my own vitiated reason. I found my reason had been deceived and corrupted by the suggestions of an enemy, and that I could trust it no more till it was renewed by grace: that my memory was filled with a train of false ideas, every moment presenting themselves, and leading me from God; and that my understanding was totally dark till Divine illumination should visit me.

Reading Mr. Hervey's Dialogues, this light shone upon me, and I was much delighted with the discovery of the Divinity of Christ, and the atonement which he made for sinners. About this time I heard Mr. Fugil preach : his discourse was suited to one in my state, and the power of my evil reasonings was suspended while he described the work of grace in the soul. I saw the way of justification and full sanctification so clearly that I could trace the path as if it had been a road delineated in a map. The next discovery I had was the hardness of my heart : this called off my attention from every thing else ; neither fears nor joys, heaven nor hell, made any impression on it : I often thought that Satan himself could not possibly have a more obdurate heart. I found it was full of pride, ambition, anger, evil desire, unbelief, and every thing that was vile and vain. Being invited to join the society, I gladly embraced the opportunity, and found much encouragement to seek the Lord, notwithstanding all the wretchedness I felt in myself.

Attending to the experience of the people, I observed that almost all of them, during the time of conviction, were exercised with horrible fears and terrors ; and thence I concluded it was necessary I should have the same. For at that time I did not know that frequently those distracting terrors were from the enemy, in order to drive the soul into despair. I therefore used every method to bring myself under dreadful apprehensions ; hoping this would break my stubborn heart : but I could never find that kind of experience. After several weeks' struggling with this obduracy, at last I resigned myself to the Lord, when he was pleased to regard my distress ; and while W. Brammah was at prayer the softening power of grace descended and removed the stony heart. I now found a great change in my mind, but it was not complete ; for I had no consciousness of the pardon of sin, which I was convinced was the privilege of the children of God : therefore I could not conclude myself justified : however, I began to seek for that blessing with all diligence : many difficulties occurred in the way, The old train of pernicious ideas continually presented themselves : I could not meditate a moment without sinking into deism ; and I was equally embarrassed with the doctrine of predestination. Indeed their connection

seemed inseparable ; I could not by any means disjoin one from the other. And I repeatedly found that the moment I suffered my mind to embrace either of them, I lost sight of God, and plunged into blackness of darkness. The wretchedness I then felt was insupportable, accompanied with suggestions to blaspheme, or to embrace atheism. After many sore conflicts the Lord showed me a path by which I might escape ; and that was by staying my mind upon him, and ceasing from these reasonings. This I found was a safe, though painful path : it equally mortified my proud reason and vain imaginations, while gracious promises occurred, and encouraged me to follow on to know the Lord. Now I began to look up for the pardon of sin ; I saw that it was purchased by Christ, and that God gave it freely ; that no works or sufferings of mine could in the least degree merit this blessing ; but that it was to be received by faith. But here again I was greatly embarrassed ; the Scripture universally testified that I must believe or perish ; my friends were continually urging me to believe, and I should be saved. Upon close examination I found that I did believe every truth in the Bible ; yet this did not bring a sense of justification. And I durst not think that God was reconciled to me, when I was conscious of the contrary.— But the Lord soon brought me out of this dilemma, by showing me that to forgive was his prerogative ; and to believe was my duty. This believing for salvation I found was a distinct thing from believing I was saved ; I found it implied the lifting up of my heart to the Lord in fervent prayer, looking to him with a single eye and steady aim ; without evil reasonings or vain wanderings ; cleaving to him with all my strength ; casting my soul upon his mercy and depending upon his promises. While I persisted in this I found I was saved from many evils, and the great blessing I had in view was often near : sometimes I could lay hold on it for a moment, and found peace and joy ; but I had been so long habituated to unbelief that it often rose spontaneously, and overturned all my consolation.— I had therefore to renew my efforts hourly, and to rise as speedily as possible from every fall. In this exercise I continued about two months. Many times I lost my way by too scrupulously regarding the experience of

others, yet I had never found any thing like despair, unless I wilfully reasoned myself into it: nor could I attain to any deep terrors, which were too much insisted on as a necessary branch of conviction. I likewise formed wrong ideas of justification: I wanted some great work to be wrought upon me, that I might have something very remarkable to boast of. And, therefore, when the Lord gently drew near, and manifested his peace in a small degree, I rejected it with displeasure. I even contended with the Lord, till he strongly impressed upon my mind these words: "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." I was now convinced of the necessity of receiving, with thankfulness, the smallest tokens of the Divine favour; and that I must suffer, with childlike simplicity, the Lord to lead me in his own way. This was soon followed by a clear manifestation of pardoning mercy, that excluded all doubts, temptations, and fears, accompanied with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I continued praising a reconciled God for some days. The happiness I felt carried me above every difficulty. I could discern and reject the first approach of temptation. I now thought my mountain was so strong, I should never be moved. I did not know that I should meet with war any more. Indeed I expected to go right forward to heaven in a short time. My mind had been so intensely engaged in seeking pardon that I had quite forgot there was a farther work of grace to be wrought in me. But the Lord did not suffer me to remain long under this mistake; he soon discovered the remains of the carnal mind, and the necessity of its removal: I had scarce begun earnestly to seek after that blessing, before the tempter returned with double rage. I saw an invaluable privilege before me, but the way was difficult; a thousand arguments were presented to discourage my pursuit. Once I lost the peace of God by attending to a discourse which set justification exceeding high, confounding it with full sanctification. Viewing myself in this false glass, and not finding I had all the marks which the preacher said be-

longed to one born of God, I fell into the snare of Satan ; gave up my shield, and suffered myself to be persuaded that all I had experienced of the goodness of God was a mere delusion. For some hours I was in as deep distress as I had ever known. And I saw no way to escape but by returning to the Lord in faith, who then discovered and broke the snare.

I had suffered much by evil reasonings on many occasions ; but now I was determined to use double vigilance against them. Yet the enemy suggested to me, "Thou mayest now take thy time ; thou art a child of God ; and if once in Christ, always in Christ : as for full sanctification, it will be accomplished some time or other ; perhaps in the article of death. God has begun the work, and he will finish it ; therefore take thy ease, and enjoy thy present comfort." But I saw, whether these were true or false arguments, the conclusion was deadly. Therefore I rejected the suggestions with all my might, and determined to be wholly devoted to God. In the midst of great exercises of mind, through manifold temptations, I omitted no opportunity of exhorting all about me to flee from the wrath to come. God was pleased to smile upon my weak endeavours, and to make me instrumental in the conversion of several. Afterward I was convinced I ought to act in a more public manner ; but I saw the danger of being too forward, as well as of being too backward, and was enabled to keep from both extremes. When an opportunity offered of giving an exhortation in any of the neighbouring societies, I did it with much fear and trembling ; but I durst not shun the cross. Indeed I laboured under great disadvantages. Through a natural impediment in my speech I could not easily pronounce several words : and it was a considerable time before I could conquer, or substitute others in their place. I hoped my acquaintance with authors on most subjects might be of some use to me ; but I was greatly mistaken ; my mind was in a situation that forbade all kind of meditation. If I attempted any such thing I was instantly filled with my old deistical ideas again. I was therefore necessitated to stay my thoughts upon the Lord, and to follow his light and truth as they shone upon me. What knowledge I had acquired while in the spirit of apostacy from God, I

was obliged to throw away as altogether useless. After some time a scene opened which was both painful and profitable; we took an old chapel in a neighbouring village, the inhabitants of which, in general, differed very little from the savage Indians. Here I frequently preached to large congregations, and met with plenty of persecution for my pains: but it was not unexpected, and I was determined to stand it though it should cost me my life.

One time a popish gentleman hired some men to pull me out of the pulpit; though I was ignorant of their design, I providentially fixed my eye upon them as soon as they came in. They were confounded, and stayed peaceably till the service was over. Sometimes the mob revenged themselves on the door and windows, throwing whatever came next to hand; and then followed us through the streets with mire and dirt. At an adjoining village, where I was to preach, some had engaged a madman; and to qualify him more perfectly for the work, had made him drunk. He came armed with a large club, and raging in a most furious manner. I was waiting calmly for the event, when the man's wife came in, and having endeavoured in vain to persuade him to go away, fell into violent fits. Seeing this, he instantly became as quiet as a lamb, and we returned without the least injury.

Soon after, I entered into the most afflicting dispensation I had ever known, which continued three months. I gradually sunk into unaccountable anguish of mind, as if the powers of darkness surrounded me without intermission. Sometimes such a horror penetrated my whole soul, as if I had committed some atrocious crime, and was instantly to stand before the great Judge to receive the sentence of eternal damnation. Very often I expected instant death; my whole frame seemed just dissolving. In the midst of all I found the grace of God was sufficient to support me under it; my conscience was free from condemnation; and I saw this distress was part natural, and part diabolical. I still kept cleaving to the Lord and staying my mind upon him; the cloud broke, and my former peace returned. I found something daily dying within me, but what it was I could not tell. When I was at the lowest, I began to rise again, and continued increasing in the life of God for three months more. I was then one evening

meeting my band, when the power of the Lord descended in an uncommon manner, and I believed he had purified my heart. At first I rejected it through a sense of my unworthiness. But the witness again returned. I considered, "What have I either done or suffered that could induce the Lord to show me this great mercy?" And I was upon the point of giving up again, when it occurred to my mind, "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." I was then constrained to acquiesce, and said, Since it is so, I will hold fast if I can.

The next morning I awoke in such power and peace as I had never known, and the promises in the latter part of the 30th chapter of Ezekiel were applied in such a manner as left no doubt but the Lord had wrought that great change in me. Nevertheless, it was not in the manner I expected. I supposed a soul saved from all sin would be a great, wise, and glorious creature; whereas I found myself infinitely little, and mean, and base; I had such a discovery of my own nothingness as humbled me to the dust continually. I felt myself as ignorant and helpless as an infant, and knew I could not stand a moment without the Divine aid. Nor did I find such overflowing joys as I expected, but only an even, permanent peace, which kept my heart in the knowledge and love of God. Meantime several scriptures were opened to me at once; and I found a delightful relish for the whole. But still I found knowledge in Divine things was to be acquired gradually through patient labour; and that even this was limited; God giving no more than was necessary, and at such times as he pleased. I walked in this liberty some months, till one day I met with a circumstance which grieved me. I attended too much to the temptation, and was not inwardly watchful; so before I was aware, the temptation took place in my heart, and I found myself angry for a moment or two. As I never expected to feel this evil any more, my distress was inconceivable for three or four hours; the enemy suggesting that I was now an apostate from the pure love of God, and could never be restored. I cried mightily to the Lord, and he discovered the device of the enemy, and healed the wound that had been made. He likewise showed me that as I had received Christ Jesus,

so I must walk in him ; that the same faith by which I entered into rest must be continued, in order to be established in that liberty.

The conference being at Leeds in the year 1762, I attended with a design of edifying by the public discourses and private conversation of the preachers. And herein I had abundant reason to be satisfied. Mr. Wesley's sermons were in a peculiar manner calculated for establishing me in what I had lately experienced. During the conference it appeared there wanted several more preachers, as itinerants, in different circuits. My friends proposed me for one, and asked if I had any objection. As I was resigned to any station that Providence seemed to point out, I submitted to the judgment of my brethren. Being admitted on trial, I returned home to settle my affairs ; and in the latter end of February, 1763, I went into the Dales circuit. When I got to Darlington the town was in an uproar, occasioned by George Bell's prophecy. That day, according to his prediction, the world was to be destroyed. Many people were much frightened ; but their fears soon gave place to resentment, and they threatened to pull down the house, and burn the first preacher that came. However, considering that God was all-sufficient, I told Mrs. Oswald, if she would venture the house, I would venture myself. Notice being given for preaching, the place was soon filled with people rude enough. Providentially I found in the Newcastle paper a paragraph wherein Mr. Wesley disavowed all connection with Mr. Bell, and all credit to his prophecy. This I read to the people, which instantly quieted them, and they attended patiently to the end of the meeting. A poor backslider was that night cut to the heart, and roared out in a tremendous manner. But shortly after he found mercy, and died in peace.

In this circuit I found several societies of sincere people ; but many of them were settled upon their lees : those who had obtained justification were resting in their past experience, and had little expectation of being saved from inward sin till death. I spoke strongly of full salvation, and God gave the word success. Several were stirred up to seek for purity of heart, and others were convinced of sin. Mr. Samuel Meggot, a zealous, pious preacher, was my fellow labourer, in whom I found the affection of a

parent. Meeting me one day in the Dales, he said, "You must make haste to Barnard-Castle; the people are all in confusion; six or seven of them have found full sanctification, and the rest are tearing one another to pieces about it." When I got to the town I found many were not a little prejudiced against me as a setter forth of strange doctrines. I attempted to preach among them, but could find no liberty; I met the society, but it was still the same. I was just going to conclude, when, in an instant, the power of God descended in a wonderful manner. The assembly were all in tears, some praising God for pardoning mercy, and others for purifying grace. And even those who could not yet understand this new doctrine, were constrained to say, "If we do not believe it, we will never speak against it any more." The snare of the enemy was effectually broken; and from that time the work spread, not only through the town, but also into the neighbouring societies. We seldom had any meeting, public or private, but some were either convinced, justified, or saved from all sin.

The society in Wear-Dale consisted of thirty-six members. But on Sunday, at two o'clock, the Divine power descended upon the assembly; six persons, one after another, dropped down, and as soon as they came to themselves cried out for mercy. The work from that time revived and spread through different parts of the Dale, and the society was soon doubled in its number; many of whom stand to this day. In other places the people were remarkably lively, and many were added to the societies. I continued in this circuit till July, 1764, having the satisfactory evidence that I was acting in a station suitable to the design of Providence. This greatly supported me in the various difficulties that unavoidably occurred. Indeed I exerted myself much above my strength, both in preaching and travelling, often venturing in tempestuous weather over those dreary fells when even the mountaineers themselves durst not. I was frequently in danger of being swallowed up in the bogs or carried away by the torrents. Sometimes I have rode over valleys where the snow was eight or ten feet deep for two or three furlongs together. When the danger was most imminent I not only found a calm resignation, but a solid rejoicing in the God of my salvation. G. S.

MR. JOHN MASON.

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TO REV. JOHN WESLEY.

Motcomb, near Shaftsbury, Aug. 31, 1780.

REV. SIR,—I am a person who has neither ability nor inclination to say much of myself; being desirous to be little and unknown. Nevertheless, if this short account of the mercy of God to a sinner may be of the least use to any, all the praise shall be given to Him by whose grace I am what I am : for I always desire to bear in mind that testimony of St. Paul, 1 Timothy i, 15, “ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; of whom I am chief.”

I was born in the year of our Lord 1732, in the parish of Hambledon, about eight miles from Portsmouth. When I was about four years old my father died, and soon after my mother. Such was the order of Divine Providence that I had but little knowledge of, or help from them : but almighty Goodness provided for me. When my mother died I was removed to Portsmouth Common, by the care of her own sister, the wife of Mr. Richard Libbard, who had lived there in good credit for many years ; and I was to them as their own child. I believe my aunt lived in the fear of God, and, according to the light she had, endeavoured to bring me up in a religious manner. I have great reason to be thankful to God on her account. Many of her instructions I remember to this day, with much comfort ; and I have not a doubt but that she is now in Abraham’s bosom. Yet, notwithstanding all the care that was taken of me, I gave way to evil, and did many things contrary to the word of God ; on account of which I remember to have felt many sharp convictions before I was ten years of age. I was often alarmed with the fear of death and judgment. I trembled at the thought of being cast into the fire of hell. At those times I

frequently went alone, and prayed that God would have mercy upon me, and save me from my sins. As I grew up, I saw more and more into the evil of sin. But although I truly hated sin, I was often overcome by it, which abundantly increased my pain and sorrow. But it was by hearing a sermon of Mr. Whitefield's, and those of a pious minister whose congregation I now attended, that my convictions deepened. I began to see myself as I never had done before, and to know I was a fallen child of Adam. I felt the burden with deep distress. My sleep departed from me, and I neglected to take my necessary food. I cried to God night and day. I longed for his salvation. But I was afraid Christ did not die for me. When this persuasion prevailed it cut me off. I was as one that had no hope. I cannot describe the anguish that tortured my poor soul. Sometimes I wished I had never been born; at other times that I had been an idiot from my birth. And many times, such was my ignorance, and the force of temptation, I complained against God for making me what I was.

While I was exercised in this gloomy, dejected manner, I, one evening, took up the New Testament to read, and I hope never to forget the time or place. As I read I felt, I cannot tell how, an unusual going out after God and Christ. At once my eye and all the powers of my soul were fixed on those words, Heb. ii, 9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory, and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." The deep silence that rested on me gave way, and I broke out, as in an ecstasy of joy, not regarding who might hear,—

For me he lived, and for me he died.

In a moment all my burthen of pain and sorrow fled away, and all my soul was filled with peace and joy. I was all love to God and man. Truly my delight was in the Almighty, and I began to sing aloud,—

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise:
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of his grace.

Happy would it have been for me if I had been careful to grow in the grace of God. But I gave way to a curious spirit, and puzzled myself with doubtful disputations. And by this means I gradually damped the grace of God, and cast the blessing away I had been intrusted with. Soon after this the Methodist preachers came to Portsmouth. I went to hear them, and the word was made profitable to me. I felt new desires, and was often much comforted, and I once more resolved to give up my body and soul a sacrifice to God. I was admitted into the society by Mr. James Oddy. I continued to meet with them for some time, and many were the blessings I thereby received. But after a time a stumbling block was laid in my way, and I left the society. But it was chiefly owing to my inexperience and want of patience. I ought to have minded one thing, whatever others did, and to have pressed on to the prize of our high calling.

After this I went on for five years in darkness, misery, and distress, yea, many times almost in despair; yet I constantly attended the preaching, and sometimes was permitted to stay at the meeting of the society; but when my much esteemed friend, Mr. Robert Roberts, came into the circuit, he was informed of me; for I believe both the preachers and people had a regard for me. He gave me a note of admittance again. May I never forget this mercy!

It was not long after, being at a prayer meeting with a few friends, that I recovered the peace and love of God. My soul was humbled in the dust; I became solidly happy in God my Saviour. I was watchful, and spent much time in prayer: the word of God was my daily companion, and it was spirit and life to my soul. My faith was now strengthened: my love to God and man increased abundantly. The Lord held me by my hand, and fed me with the bread of life. He gave me to drink of the water of the river of life, and I was happy all the day long. Such was the blessing I continually enjoyed, I lived near to God, keeping Jesus in my view, as my life, my pattern, and my all.

When Mr. Francis Gilbert appointed me to take care of a class, it was a great trial. But so much the more did the Lord make it a blessing to me. For while I

prayed for my brethren, and laboured to help them forward in the way to the kingdom, he gave me great consolation in my own soul. And I began to feel a stronger desire for the salvation of poor sinners. I reprov'd, advis'd, and comforted, as opportunity serv'd ; being, at the same time, particularly careful over my own behaviour. Meantime, by the desire of my friends, I sometimes read a sermon, or some part of the Christian Library. I did this first in our own society, and afterward in that of a neighbouring town. Sometimes also I ventured to give a few words of exhortation ; and the people not only bore with my weakness, but urg'd me to do it more frequently. Some time after I felt a strong conviction that it was my duty to preach. I did so occasionally ; and, though it was with much weakness, fear, and trembling, the Lord owned my feeble attempts : the people were profited, and my own soul was helped forward in the grace of God. I advis'd with the assistant, and the other preachers, and being encouraged by them, I went on therein, relying upon God, who giveth strength to them that have no might.

But I was not long satisfied with this. I found a stronger and stronger conviction that it was my duty to give myself wholly up to the work of God, and to commence an itinerant preacher. But I shrunk from the thought. I wept, and prayed, and strove against it with all my might, till I had well nigh lost all the life and peace of God out of my soul. Yet I did not comply : it was so contrary to the plan I had just laid down, having (as I supposed) settled myself for life. It was my desire and design to live and die among my first religious acquaintance, and then to lay my bones by the side of my dear and only brother, just torn from me by the hand of death.— But not being able to resist any longer, I laid the matter before Mr. Furz, and the other preachers in the circuit. They advis'd me to fight against God no more, but prepare myself against the next conference. I did so, and attended at Bristol in August, 1761. I can truly say I had no other end in view but the glory of God and the good of souls. With regard to this world I had all I wanted, and to spare. And I had a prospect of easily gaining much more, had I remained in my business, which

was steady and continually increasing. But this I gave up freely, nor have I repented of it one moment since. And if it were to do again, I believe I should do it with the same cheerfulness. For He is worthy of all my service who has bought me with his precious blood.

You, sir, were pleased to appoint me to labour in the York circuit with Mr. Furz and Mr. Pool. It was a year of much peace and comfort : and I resolved, in the strength of Christ, to continue spending, and be spent, in the blessed work to my life's end.

It is of little use to say in what parts of England, Ireland, and the Isle of Man I have laboured ; or how many persons have been convinced of sin, or converted to God : or how many have been added to the societies in the circuits wherein I have laboured. Let it suffice that this, and all I am, will be fully known in that great day. But I believe I may be permitted to mention, in the fear of God, that after sixteen years' labour, I do not know that either my principles or practice have given you, sir, or any of my brethren cause to repent, for a moment, that you received me as a fellow labourer in the house of God. And in this I am the same at this day as at first. I still esteem it no small privilege to act with you as a son in the Gospel, to be directed by you, where, when, and how to act.

I bless God I still daily enjoy a measure of his grace and love. But I am ashamed when I consider how little improvement I have made. I long to have every thing taken from me that is not agreeable to the mind that was in Christ.

For many years I have been fully satisfied with regard to the doctrines of the Methodists ; and in them I hope to live and die. But from the time that I recovered the favour of God I have always been averse to disputing. I remember how much I suffered thereby in the beginning of my turning to God. And I believe it would be happy if all the children of God would strive to agree as far as possible ; and live in love as brethren, and strive to help each other in fighting the good fight of faith. This is the one desire, and I hope it will be the continual labour of, Rev. sir, your dutiful son in the Gospel,

JOHN MASON.

MR. THOMAS MITCHELL.

I WAS born in the parish of Bingley, Yorkshire, December 3d, 1726. My parents both died in the faith. I lived with them seven years, and seven years more with an uncle, who was in the same parish. From five years old I had strong convictions at times, and put up many prayers for mercy. And though I had no one to teach me, yet I had the fear of God in my heart. If I was overtaken in any sin, I was much troubled till I had said many prayers, which I thought would make all up. At fourteen I was put apprentice to be a mason. While I lived with my master I had little concern for my soul.— But after six years, at the time of the rebellion, I enlisted among the Yorkshire Blues. I continued with them about a year. There was one man among us who had the fear of God before his eyes. He gave me good advice, which, one time in particular, took great effect upon me and my comrade. We both of us were under deep convictions, but knew not what to do to be saved. I began to fear exceedingly, knowing I was not fit to die. These words followed me continually: “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” I thought I must fulfil the law, or be damned. I strove all I could to fulfil it; but I thought I grew worse and worse, till my load was many times heavier than I could bear.

In the year 1746, the rebellion being over, we were discharged. I then sought for a people that feared God, and soon joined the society. I heard John Nelson several times, and began to have some hope of finding mercy: some time after I went to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and was convinced that we are to be saved by faith: yea, that the very worst of sinners might be saved by faith in Christ Jesus. Soon after I heard Mr. Charles Wesley preach from these words, “I am determined not to know any

thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." He showed clearly that Christ is able and willing to save the greatest sinners. I was much refreshed under the sermon, and much more so in singing these words,—

Whither should a sinner go ?
His wounds for me stand open'd wide :
Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified.

But when he told us we might know our sins forgiven in this life ; yea, this very moment, it seemed to me new doctrine, and I could not believe it all. But I continued in prayer ; and in a few days I was convinced of it to my great joy. The love of Christ broke into my soul, and drove away all guilt and fear : and at the same time he filled my heart with love both to God and man. I saw that God was my salvation, and now could trust him, and praise him with joyful lips. I could sing with all my heart,—

O what shall I do my Saviour to praise !
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace ?
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,
The weakest believer that hangs upon him !

Soon after this Mr. John Wesley came to Bradforth, and preached on, "This one thing I do." He joined several of us together in a class, which met about a mile from the town. But all of them fell back, and left me alone ; yet afterward some of them returned. Before this I thought my hill was so strong I could never be moved. But seeing so many fall into sin, I began to see danger in my way. I began to feel an evil heart of unbelief, and was fully convinced that there must be a farther change in my heart before I could be established in grace. Afterward I removed to Kighley, and had many opportunities of hearing and profiting by Mr. Grimshaw. But feeling my corruptions, with strong temptations, I fell into great doubtings. I was almost in despair, full of unbelief. I could scarce pray at all. I was in this state near half a year, finding no comfort in any thing. But one evening one of our friends prayed in the society, and my soul was set at liberty. All my doubts fled away, and faith and love once more sprung up in my heart. I afterward saw that God had a farther end in these trials and deliverances.

Not long after this I felt a great desire to tell others what God had done for my soul. I wanted my fellow creatures to turn to the Lord, but saw myself utterly unfit to speak for him. I saw the neighbourhood in which I lived abounding with all manner of wickedness; and no man caring for their souls, or warning them to flee from the wrath to come. I began to reprove sin wherever I was, though many hated me for so doing. I did not regard that; for God gave me an invincible courage. But still I did not see clearly whether I was called to speak in public or not. After many reasonings in my mind I ventured to give notice of a meeting. When the time came, my soul was bowed down within me; my bones shook, and one knee smote against the other. I had many to hear me; some of them heard me with pain, and advised me to speak no more in public. But one young woman was convinced of her lost condition, and never rested till she found redemption.

But this did not satisfy my friends. So, as they were not willing to receive me, I went to those that would; and God began to bless my weak endeavours. Yet I was not satisfied myself. For several weeks I had great trouble in my mind. I thought no man's case was like mine.— Sometimes I wished I had never been born. Most of my friends were against me. I was full of fears within, and had a persecuting world without. But all this time my heart was drawn out in prayer that God would show me the way wherein I should go. Being now employed at Sir Walter Coverley's, in the parish of Guisely, I met with a few serious people at Yeadon. They were just setting out in the ways of God, and desired me to give a word of exhortation among them. I did so a few times, and God was pleased to bless it to their souls. The little society increased, and they all dearly loved one another. But Satan was not idle. Every time we met, a riotous mob gathered around the house, and disturbed us much. One evening, while William Darney was preaching, the curate of Guisely came at the head of a large mob, who threw eggs in his face, pulled him down, dragged him out of the house on the ground, and stamped upon him. The curate himself then thought it was enough, and bade them let him alone, and go their way. Some time after Jonathan

Maskew came. As soon as he began to speak the same mob came, pulled him down, and dragged him out of the house. They then tore off his clothes, and dragged him along upon his naked back, over the gravel and pavement. When they thought they had sufficiently bruised him, they let him go, and went away. With much difficulty he crept to a friend's house, where they dressed his wounds, and got him some clothes. It was my turn to go next. No sooner was I at the town than the mob came, like so many roaring lions. My friends advised me not to preach that night; and undertook to carry me out of the town. But the mob followed me in a great rage, and stoned me for near two miles, so that it was several weeks before I got well of the bruises I then received.

About this time a carpenter was swearing horribly, whom I calmly reprov'd. He immediately flew in a violent passion; and having an axe in his hand, lifted it up, and swore he would cleave my head in a moment. But just as he was going to strike, a man that stood by snatched hold of his arm, and held him till his passion cooled. At first I felt a little fear, but it soon vanished away.

While I was working at Sir Walter's, some one informed him that I was a Methodist. He was much displeased, saying, "I like him for a workman; but I hate his religion." This was chiefly owing to his steward, whom I had often reprov'd for swearing. He mortally hated me on that account. But in a little time he was taken ill. Perceiving himself worse, he sent a message to me, earnestly desiring I would come and pray with him. I went, and found him in an agony of conviction, crying aloud for mercy. I showed him where mercy was to be found, and then went to prayer with him. While I was praying his heart seemed broken, and he was bathed in tears. He owned he had been a grievous sinner; but he cried to God with his latest breath, and, I believe, not in vain.

I stayed some time after in these parts, and was fully employed. All the day I wrought diligently in my business; in the evenings I called sinners to repentance. And now the mobs were not so furious; so that we had no considerable interruption. In the meantime I waited to see whether the Lord had any thing for me to do. I made

it matter of continual prayer that he would make my way plain before me ; and in a little while I had much more of the best work upon my hands. I was desired to give an exhortation at a village called Hartwith. I went thither several times. Several here were deeply convinced of sin ; and two or three soon found redemption in the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins. Afterward I was invited to Thirsk. Here I found a few hungry souls ; but they were as sheep without a shepherd, seldom hearing any thing like the Gospel. I spent two nights among them : the serious people were much refreshed : some were awakened and saw their danger, and cried out for mercy.

After this I went to Stockton, where I found a lively people, who had been joined in society for some time.— I preached several times among them with great liberty of soul and freedom of speech ; and to all appearance the word had much effect on the hearers. Here I met with Mr. Larwood, who behaved very kindly to me, and told me he hoped I should be very useful if I kept humble.— He then sent me before him to York and Leeds, where I preached and gave notice of his coming. From Leeds I went to Birstal. It happened to be their preaching night. John Nelson was sick in bed, so the people desired me to preach or give them a word of exhortation. Accordingly I preached in the best manner I could, and the people seemed well satisfied. The next day I went to Hightown, and preached to a large congregation in the evening. I had much liberty in speaking, and found a great blessing to my own soul ; and I have reason to believe that the people were well satisfied.

From Birstal I went to Heptonstol. Here I met with a lively people, who received me very kindly. I gave several exhortations among them, and the word went with power to many hearts. I continued some time in these parts, and went to several places in Lancashire. Here also I found many were awakened, and several found peace with God while I was among them. I endeavoured to form a regular circuit in these parts, and in a little time gained my point.

I continued in these parts some time, and have reason to hope that I was useful among them. In one place

I met with a mob of women, who put me into a pond of water, which took me nearly over my head. But by the blessing of God I got out safe, and walked about three miles in my wet clothes, but I caught no cold. I continued some time in these parts, encouraged by the example and good advice of Mr. Grimshaw. One time Paul Greenwood and I called at his house together, and he gave us a very warm exhortation, which I shall not soon forget. He said, "If you are sent of God to preach the Gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. Indeed you must not expect to gain much of this world's goods by preaching the Gospel. What you get must come through the devil's teeth; and he will hold it as fast as he can. I count every covetous man to be one of the devil's teeth. And he will let nothing go for God and his cause, but what is forced from him."

In the year 1751 I was stationed in Lincolnshire. I found a serious people and an open door: but there were many adversaries. This was far the most trying year which I had ever known. But in every temptation God made a way to escape, that I might be able to bear it.

On Sunday, August the 7th, I came to Rangdale. Very early in the morning, I preached as usual at five. About six, two constables came at the head of a large mob.—They violently broke in upon the people, seized upon me, pulled me down, and took me to a public house, where they kept me till four in the afternoon. Then one of the constables seemed to relent, and said, "I will go to the minister, and inquire of him whether we may not now let the poor man go?" When he came back, he said "they were not to let me go yet." So he took me out to the mob, who presently hurried me away, and threw me into a pool of standing water. It took me up to the neck.—Several times I strove to get out, but they pitched me in again. They told me I must go through it seven times. I did so, and then they let me come out. When I had got upon dry ground, a man stood ready with a pot full of white paint. He painted me all over from head to foot; and then they carried me into the public house again.—Here I was kept till they had put five more of our friends into the water. Then they came and took me out again,

and carried me to a great pond, which was railed in on every side, being ten or twelve feet deep : here four men took me by my legs and arms, and swung me backward and forward. For a moment I felt the flesh shrink ; but it was quickly gone. I gave myself up to the Lord, and was content his will should be done. They swung me two or three times, and then threw me as far as they could into the water. The fall and the water soon took away my senses, so that I felt nothing more. But some of them were not willing to have me drowned, so they watched till I came above water, and then catching hold of my clothes with a long pole, made shift to drag me out.

I lay senseless for some time. When I came to myself I saw only two men standing by me. One of them helped me up, and desired me to go with him. He brought me to a little house, where they quickly put me to bed. But I had not lain long before the mob came again, pulled me out of bed, carried me into the street, and swore they would take away one of my limbs, if I would not promise to come there no more. I told them "I could promise no such thing." But the man that had hold of me promised for me, and took me back into the house, and put me to bed again. Some of the mob then went to the minister again, to know what they must do with me. He told them, "You must take him out of the parish." So they came and took me out of bed a second time. But I had no clothes to put on ; my own being wet, and also covered with paint. But they put an old coat about me, took me about a mile, and set me upon a little hill. They then shouted three times, "God save the king, and the devil take the preacher," and left me. Here they left me penniless and friendless : for no one durst come near me. And my strength was nearly gone ; so that I had much ado to walk, or even to stand. But from the beginning to the end my mind was in perfect peace. I found no anger or resentment, but could heartily pray for my persecutors. But I knew not what to do, or where to go. Indeed, one of our friends lived three or four miles off. But I was so weak and ill that it did not seem possible for me to get so far. However, I trusted in God, and set out : and at length I got to the house. The family did every thing for me that was in their power : they got me clothes,

and whatever else was needful. I rested four days with them, in which time my strength was tolerably restored. Then I went into the circuit, and (blessed be God!) saw much fruit of my labour. In the midst of persecutions many were brought to the saving knowledge of God.—And as the sufferings of Christ abounded, so our consolations by Christ abounded also. As to the lions at Rangedale, an appeal to the court of king's bench made both them and the minister quiet as lambs.

Coming in December into Lancashire, I found trials of quite another kind. The poor people were in the utmost confusion, like a flock of frightened sheep. John Bennet, who before loved and revered Mr. Wesley for his work's sake, since he got into his new opinions hated him cordially, and laboured to set all the people against him. He told them in the open congregation that Mr. Wesley was a pope, and that he preached nothing but popery.—December the 30th I met him at Bolton. I desired him to preach; but he would not. So I got up and spoke as well as I could, though with a heavy heart. After I had done, he met the society, and said many bitter things of Mr. Wesley. He then spread out his hands, and cried, "Popery, popery! I will not be in connection with him any more." I could not help telling him, "The spirit in which you now speak is not of God. Neither are you fit for the pulpit while you are in such a spirit." While I was speaking, a woman that stood by me struck me in the face with all her might. Immediately all the congregation was in an uproar. So I thought it best to retire.—After, I believed it was my duty to expostulate with him. But it did not avail: it seemed to me that all love was departed from him. His mind was wholly set against Mr. Wesley, and against the whole Methodist doctrine and discipline. And he had infused his own spirit into the people in many places; so that I had hard work among them. But the Lord kept my soul in peace and love.—Glory be unto his holy name!

In May, 1752, I came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, after all the storms I had gone through, I was greatly refreshed among a loving, peaceable people, with whom I laboured with much satisfaction. And it pleased the Lord to prosper my labour in Berwick-upon-Tweed,

Gateshead-Fell, and many other places, where many sinners were both convinced and converted to God.

On May 8, 1753, I came with Mr. Wesley from Newcastle to York. On the 12th he preached to a large congregation; and the next morning from, "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find mercy and grace to help in time of need." I never saw a congregation so affected. Most of the people were in tears; some for joy, and some from a sense of their sins. He had designed to go on to Lincolnshire. But through the importunity of the people he consented to stay a little at York, and desired me to go in his place.

From the following conference, (at which fourteen preachers were present, beside Mr. Wesley and his brother,) I went into Wiltshire, where Mr. Pearce of Bradford, was a father to me. Here I formed a firm resolution of cleaving more closely to God than ever I had done before. I longed to be wholly freed from the enemies which I carried in my own bosom. I saw no other could possibly hurt me, if I could but conquer myself. I read the Bible much, and prayed much, and found many blessings from the Lord. And I found in particular an entire disengagement from all earthly things. My soul was even as a weaned child. I was willing to be any thing or nothing. I had no desire for any thing in this world, but to live unto the glory of God. O how easy does it make every thing when we can give up all for Christ!

After I had spent some time in Devonshire and Cornwall, I was sent for up to London. Here I had a fever for some time. When I was pretty well recovered. Mr. Wesley desired me to go down to Norwich. I was not well upon the road, but was abundantly worse when I came thither. But following the advice of a skilful man, I was in a little while restored to health and strength.—Here I found much comfort among a poor, but a very loving people. I was here (putting the first and the second time together) about four years. But in the latter part of this time I had many trials from J. Wheatley's people. Mr. Wesley had been prevailed upon to take the Tabernacle, and to receive his people under his care.—Wheatley used to call them "his dear lambs," but such lionlike lambs did I never see. Discipline they knew

nothing of; every one would do what was right in his own eyes. And our doctrine was an abomination to them. Great part of them were grounded in Antinomianism. The very sound of perfection they abhorred; they could hardly bear the word holiness. Nothing was pleasing to them but "faith, faith;" without a word either of its inward or outward fruits.

Between the first and second time of my being at Norwich, I spent some time in Sussex. The first place that I preached at was Rye, where no Methodist had ever preached before. Yet there was no opposition, but they received the word with joy and readiness of mind. And many soon felt the burden of their sins, several of whom quickly found peace with God. Most of these very willingly joined together in a little society. Some of them are lodged in Abraham's bosom; and others still remain walking in the way to Sion. Hence I went to several country places. But they were not all so peaceable as at Rye. At the desire of a serious man I went to Hawkhurst: he had requested me to preach at his house.—About six in the evening I began. But I had not spoke many words before a numerous mob broke in, pulled me down from the place where I stood, and forced me out of the house. Then they struck up my heels, and dragged me upon my back about half a mile, to a public house called Highgate, where I found many gentlemen, with the minister of the parish. They asked, "By what authority do you preach?" I answered, "By the authority of King George;" and showed them my license. They spoke a little together, and said, "You may go about your business." But observing the house was filled with a drunken mob, I said, "Gentlemen, I will not go unless I have a constable to guard me." They immediately sent for a constable who guarded me to the house from whence I came. But, as it was winter time, and the road very dirty, I was in a poor condition; being a good deal bruised, and all my clothes plastered over with dirt. However, after I had got some dry clothes, and taken a little refreshment, I prayed with the family, and then God gave me quiet and refreshing sleep. When I came to London I applied to a lawyer, who sent down writs for five of the ringleaders. But they quickly came to an agreement.—

They readily paid all the charges. And here ended our persecution in Sussex. I found a thankful heart for a good king, good laws, and liberty of conscience. And about this time I had much of the presence of the Lord : he was good to me, both as to my body and soul. I prayed much, and the Lord heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

In August, 1778, I was stationed in Staffordshire, where I spent the year with much satisfaction. I now look back on the labour of three and thirty years, and I do not repent of it. I am not grown weary, either of my Master, or the work I am engaged in. Though I am weak in body, and in the decline of life, my heart is still engaged in the cause of God. I am never more happy than when I feel the love of Christ in my heart, and am declaring his praise to others. There is nothing like the love of Christ in the heart to make us holy and happy. It is love alone that expels all sin out of the heart. Wherever love is wanting there is hell : and where love fills the heart, there is heaven. This has been a medicine to me ever since I set out. When I was low, it was this that raised me up. When sin and Satan beset me on every side, it was this that drove them all away.

O love, how cheering is thy ray !
 All pain before thy presence flies ;
 Care, anguish, sorrow melt away
 Where'er thy healing beams arise.
 O Jesus, nothing may I see,
 Nothing hear, feel, or think, but thee."

T. M.

MR. RICHARD WHATCOAT.

I WAS born in the year 1736, in the parish of Quinton, in the county of Gloucester. My father, dying while I was young, left a widow and five children. At thirteen

years old I was bound apprentice, and served for eight years. I was never heard, during this time, to swear a vain oath, nor was ever given to lying, gaming, drunkenness, or any other presumptuous sin, but was commended for my honesty and sobriety. And from my childhood I had, at times, serious thoughts on death and eternity.

I served the greatest part of my apprenticeship at Darlaston, in Staffordshire. But at the age of twenty-one I removed from thence to Wednesbury. Here I found myself in continual danger of losing the little religion I had, as the family in which I lived had no religion at all.—Therefore I took the first opportunity that offered of removing to another place. And a kind Providence directed me to a family that “feared God and wrought righteousness.”

I soon went with them to hear the Methodists, which I did with deep attention: and when the preacher was describing the fall of man, I thought he spoke to me in particular, and spoke as if he had known every thing that ever was in my heart. When he described the nature and fruits of faith, I was conscious I had it not; and though I believed all the Scripture to be of God, yet I had not the marks of a Christian believer. And I was convinced that if I died in the state wherein I then was, I should be miserable for ever. Yet I could not conceive how I, that had lived so sober a life, could be *the chief of sinners*. But this was not long: for I no sooner discovered the spirituality of the law, and the enmity that was in my heart against God, than I could heartily agree to it. The thoughts of death and judgment now struck me with terrible fear. I had a keen apprehension of the wrath of God, and the fiery indignation due to sinners: so that I could have wished myself annihilated, or to be the vilest creature, if I could but escape judgment. In this state I was when one told me, “I know God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven all my sins: and *his Spirit witnesseth with my spirit that I am a child of God.*” This gave me a good deal of encouragement. And I determined never to rest until I had a testimony in myself that *my* sins also were forgiven. But in the meantime such was the darkness I was in, such was my consciousness of guilt, and the just displeasure of almighty God, that I could find no

rest day or night, either for soul or body ; so that life was a burden, and I became regardless of all things under the sun. Now all my virtues, which I had some reliance on once, appeared as filthy rags. And many discouraging thoughts were put into my mind : as, "Many are called ; but few chosen. Hath not the potter power over his own clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour ?" From which it was suggested to me that I was "made to dishonour," and so must inevitably perish.

On September 3, 1758, being overwhelmed with guilt and fear, as I was reading, it was as if one whispered to me, "Thou hadst better read no more ; for the more thou redest, the more thou wilt know ; *and he that knoweth his Lord's will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.*" I paused a little, and then resolved, let the consequence be what it may, I will proceed. When I came to those words, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God," as I fixed my eyes upon them, in a moment my darkness was removed, and the Spirit did bear witness with my Spirit that I was a child of God. In the same instant I was filled with unspeakable peace and joy in believing : and all fear of death, judgment, and hell, suddenly vanished away. Before this I was kept awake by anguish and fear, so that I could not get an hour's sound sleep in a night. Now I wanted not sleep, being abundantly refreshed by contemplating the rich display of God's mercy, in adopting so unworthy a creature as me to be an heir of the kingdom of heaven ! This peace and joy continued about three weeks, after which it was suggested to me, "Hast not thou deceived thyself ? Is it not presumption to think thou art a child of God ? But if thou art, thou wilt soon fall away ; thou wilt not endure to the end." This threw me into great heaviness : but it did not continue long. For as I gave myself unto prayer, and to reading and hearing the word of God at all opportunities, my evidence became clearer and clearer, my faith and love stronger and stronger.— And I found the accomplishment of that promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Yet I soon found, that though I was justified freely, I was not wholly sanctified. This brought me into a deep concern, and confirmed my resolution to admit of no peace, no, nor

truce with the evils which I still found in my heart. I was sensible both that they hindered me at present in all my holy exercises, and that I could not enter into the joy of my Lord, unless they were all rooted out. These considerations led me to consider more attentively the exceeding great and precious promises whereby we may escape all the corruption that is in the world, and be made partakers of the Divine nature. I was much confirmed in my hope of their accomplishment by frequently hearing Mr. Mather speak upon the subject. I saw it was the mere gift of God; and consequently to be received by faith. And after many sharp and painful conflicts, and many gracious visitations, on March 28th, 1761, my spirit was drawn out and engaged in wrestling with God for about two hours, in a manner I never knew before. Suddenly I was stripped of all but love. I was all love, and prayer, and praise. And in this happy state, rejoicing evermore, and in every thing giving thanks, I continued for some years, wanting nothing, for soul or body, more than I received from day to day.

I began to look around, and to observe more than ever the whole world full of sin and misery. I felt a strong desire for others to partake of the same happiness with myself. I longed to declare unto them what I knew of our Saviour. But I first sat down to count the cost, and being then fully convinced of my duty, I began to exhort those of the neighbouring towns to "repent and believe the Gospel." This I did for about a year and a half; but was still convinced that I might be more useful as a travelling preacher. This I mentioned to Mr. Pawson, a little before the conference in 1769. A little after it he wrote and let me know that he had proposed me at the conference, and that I was accepted as a probationer, and stationed in the Oxfordshire circuit. Having settled my temporal affairs, with all the expedition I could, I went into the circuit and was received far better than I expected. And I found that affection for the people which never since wore off. After spending some time very agreeably there, I believe to our mutual satisfaction, I removed to Bedford circuit, where I remained till the conference in 1774. I was then appointed for Inniskillen circuit, in the north of Ireland. This was a trial to me on

several accounts. I was an utter stranger to Ireland, of which I had heard little good spoken : I had a great aversion to sea voyages. And what troubled me more than all was, that my mother was on her dying bed. But she knew and loved the work I was engaged in. So she willingly gave me up to the Lord, though she did not expect to see me any more till we met in eternity. In this circuit I found many things that were not pleasing to flesh and blood. It took us eight weeks to go through it ; and in this time we slept in near fifty different places : some of them cold enough ; some damp enough ; and others not very clean. We commonly preached two or three times a day, beside meeting the societies and visiting the sick : and very frequently we had no other food than potatoes and a little salt meat. By this means, as my constitution was but weak, my strength was nearly exhausted. But it was an ample amends to see that the work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Upward of two hundred members were this year added to the society ; a great part of whom had found redemption through the blood of the covenant. And I was entirely willing to wear out my body in so blessed a work. But I was soon cut short : for before I got into the next circuit where I was stationed, namely, that of Armagh, my labour was at an end ; my body quite sunk under me. I was taken with an entire loss of appetite, a violent bleeding at the nose, and profuse night sweats, so that my flesh was consumed from my bones, and my eyes sunk in my head. My sight also failed me, so that I could not distinguish my most intimate acquaintance the breadth of a room. But although my life was quite despaired of, yet it pleased God to raise me up : and after a confinement of twelve weeks at Sydere, I removed into Armagh circuit. But, going out before I had sufficiently recovered my strength, the cold seized upon me, and caused such a humour to settle in my legs, that for some time I could not set my feet upon the ground. But my mind being set upon my work, I little regarded the pain of my body so long as I was able to sit on my horse, or stand and speak to the people. So, in about a fortnight, I went into my circuit again ; but in a fortnight more I was again disabled, the humour returning so violently that I was laid up for eight weeks. But these

afflictions were not grievous : they were all sweetened by the peace of God which I enjoyed, and the exceeding kindness of my friends where I was. Lord, remember them for good !

By my respite from preaching, while I travelled to Dublin, and afterward to London, and by the frequent use of bathing, both in salt and in fresh water, I gradually recovered my health. And I have great reason to bless God, who has preserved me during the eleven years I have been an itinerant preacher. In this time he has delivered me from many troubles, both of body and mind. He has enabled me to persevere in my labour with a single eye. He has kept my heart disengaged from all creature loves, and all desire of worldly happiness. And I can still truly say,—

Blest with the scorn of finite good,
My soul is lighten'd of her load ;
And seeks the things above.

With the same work, and in the same spirit, may I fill up the remnant of my days ! Then may I join the choirs around the throne, and give blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto God and the Lamb for ever and ever !

[Farther account of Mr. Whatcoat, taken from the Minutes of the Methodist Conference, held in the United States of America, in the year 1807.]

In the year 1784, Mr. Whatcoat came to the United States of America, and served the Methodist connection in various important stations, in cities, towns, circuits, and districts, with the pious fidelity of an apostolic man of God. Upward of six years in the latter part of his life, he served in the superintendency of the Church, till past the 70th year of his age. We will not use many words to describe this almost inimitable man ; so deeply serious : who ever saw him trifling or light ? who ever heard him speak evil of any person ? nay, who ever heard him speak an idle word ? dead to envy, pride, and praise. Sober without sadness ; cheerful without levity ; careful without covetousness, and decent without pride. He died not possessed of property sufficient to have paid the expenses of his sickness and funeral, if a charge had been made :

so dead was he to the world ! Although he was not a man of deep erudition, yet probably he had as much learning as some of the apostles and primitive bishops, and doubtless sufficient for the word of the ministry. He was deeply read in the work of God : his knowledge in the Scriptures was so great, that one of his friends used to call him his concordance. He gave himself greatly to reading. Notwithstanding he was called to the office of an overseer at an advanced period of life, he magnified his office by travelling annually three or four thousand miles, through all the United States. A complication of painful and irresistible diseases, produced and aggravated by excessive travelling, closed the scene. He was a prodigy of pain and patience for thirteen weeks. He departed this life, in the full assurance of faith, July 5, 1806, in the house of Richard Bassett, Esq., in Dover, Delaware state. He hath proved himself worthy the affection and confidence of the Methodist connection in Europe and America. But we cannot in a few lines speak his Christian and ministerial excellences. Indeed they cannot be fully enumerated ; for the man of deep piety frequently will not let his left hand know what his right hand doeth. Those who wish to see more of this Israelite indeed, may perhaps be favoured at some future period with a short account, written by himself, of his labours and travels in Europe and America, for about thirty-eight years. He professed the justifying and sanctifying grace of God, and all that knew him well might say, if a man upon earth possessed these blessings, surely it was Richard Whatcoat.

March 30, 1807, at the place of his tomb, (Wesley chapel, in Dover,) Bishop Asbury made some funeral observations upon the death of Richard Whatcoat, his faithful colleague, from 2 Tim. iii, 10 : “ But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long suffering, charity, patience.” “ That he had known Richard Whatcoat from his own age of fourteen to sixty-two years, most intimately, and had tried him most accurately, in the soundness of his faith, in the doctrine of universal depravity, and the complete and general atonement. The insufficiency of either moral or ceremonial righteousness for justification, in opposition to faith alone

in the merit and righteousness of Christ. The doctrine of regeneration and sanctification ; his holy manner of life, in duty, at all times, in all places, and before all people, as a Christian and as a minister ; his long suffering,—a man of great affliction of body and mind ; having been exercised with severe diseases and great labours. But this did not abate his charity, his love of God and man in all its effects, tempers, words, and actions ; bearing with resignation and patience great temptations, bodily labours, and inexpressible pain. In life and death, placid and calm. As he lived so he died.”

MR. WILLIAM GREEN.

I WAS born in London, September 22, 1739. My mother, being pregnant, with me, heard the first sermon which Mr. Wesley preached at the Foundry. Soon after, she found peace with God, and walked worthy of the Gospel to the day of her death, having been a member of the society upward of thirty years.

I had the first part of my education at the Foundry school, so that I was early instructed in the principles of religion. But I was no better than if I had not been instructed at all ; for God was not in all my thoughts. Between thirteen and fourteen I was put apprentice to a man who had some degree of the fear of God. For about three years he was able to manage me ; but afterward I neither regarded the threatenings of my master, nor the counsel of an affectionate mother, but ran on in my own ways. When my apprenticeship was out, I was for ten years a faithful servant of the devil. But for the last two years, I was very far from being a willing captive ; one hour praying against sin, the next falling into it. I could truly say, “The good that I would, I do not ; but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

About July, 1770, a person lent me one of Mr. Wesley’s journals. I read it with prayers and tears ; seeing much beauty in being persecuted for righteousness’ sake.

Soon after, I read Bishop Taylor's Rules for Holy Living and Dying : one passage struck me much : "A true lover of God is more grieved on account of an impure dream, than one who does not love him is on account of a gross outward sin." And it put me upon praying earnestly, that God would give me his love. In August following, Mr. Wesley coming to town, I went with eagerness to hear him. His text was, "My son, give me thy heart." But he shot over my head ; I understood nothing about it. However, I went in the evening to Moorfields, and heard Mr. Murlin preach. And there it pleased God to touch my heart. I went directly home greatly affected : so that my wife, though a serious woman, could not imagine what was the matter with me. But these impressions wore off, and I still continued a slave to gaming, my besetting sin. However, I continued to hear on Sundays, and was much pleased with what I heard. And after a time, my dear mother, by much persuasion, prevailed upon me too meet in a class. From this time my chains began to fall off. I think I had not met above three times, before all my outward sins left me, and I shook off all my old companions. I was now a close attendant on all the means of grace. I clearly saw that I was a fallen spirit ; and I as clearly saw that religion was to restore me to that image of God from which I fell. It was now the fear of God took place in my soul. But in this I was greatly mistaken : I thought myself a good believer ; whereas I was then as ignorant of the nature of faith as I am now of Greek. Soon after, I heard Mr. Wesley preach on, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." I listened very attentively, but still could not find out what faith was. The same evening I went to Mr. Maxfield's chapel. He was preaching upon the same text. He said, "Faith is a Divine conviction, that Christ died for *me*." But I found I could no more give myself this conviction, than I could make a world. It was now the Holy Ghost convinced me of sin, because I believed not in Jesus. I went home in deep heaviness, and told my wife I was an unbeliever, and that if I died as I was, I should go to hell. I was utterly slain by these words, "He that believeth not, shall be damned." For want of this conviction of unbelief, how many thousands stop short of saving faith !

But though I was so fully convinced of sin, I was so far from being discouraged, that I was all hope, knowing that if all the sins of the world were upon me, the mercies of God infinitely surpassed them all.

About Christmas I went to hear the letters read. One of which gave an account of a wonderful work among the children at Kingswood, some of whom were determined not to eat or sleep till they knew their sins were forgiven. I went home full of the spirit of mourning, and yet big with earnest expectation. The next day my sorrow was so great, that I could do no work; till upon praying with a friend, the cloud began to disperse, and light broke into my soul. But I was determined not to be satisfied with any thing short of an assurance of pardon. In this situation of mind I went to bed. About two o'clock the next morning, December 30, 1770, I was awakened by a full sense of the love of God. The skies poured down righteousness into my soul, and I could boldly say,—

For me I now believe he died !
He made my every crime his own.

I was now happy in God; his Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. But about three days after, I was sorely tempted; and a thought striking my mind that I was to be a preacher, this put me upon many reasonings, which strengthened the temptation. I believe the thought was from God: yet for six weeks I was greatly perplexed. However, I never lost, for one moment, the sense of my acceptance. Yea, and I knew the work of the Spirit was going on, and felt the blessedness of enduring temptation. Being at Spitalfields on Sunday, I was greatly strengthened while those words were singing,—

Even now the Lord doth pour
His blessings from above,
A kindly gracious shower
Of heart-reviving love:
The former and the latter rain,
The love of God and love of man.

My faith was strengthened, my peace flowed as a river, and I had a clearer view of a crucified Saviour. About this time a hymn book of Mr. Charles Wesley's fell into

my hands, which speaks largely and particularly concerning entire sanctification. I read it with attention, and comparing it with the Scripture, a fair prospect opened to my view. At the same time I saw my vast distance from it, in a manner I never did before. And yet I wanted to see it more, and could not bow my knee, but words to this purpose flowed from my lips,—

Show me, as my soul can bear,
The depth of inbred sin:
All the unbelief declare,
The pride that lurks within.

My prayer was answered: I had a surprising view of the total sinfulness of my heart. I knew this discovery was from God. I believed it possible to be saved from all sin before death. I believed it possible to be thus saved in a moment: and I believed that moment was near. So that I could cheerfully sing,—

The glorious crown of righteousness
To me reach'd out I view:
Conqueror through him, I soon shall seize
And wear it as my due.

In this state of mind I went to Spitalfields chapel. Mr. Wesley's text was, "Now is the day of salvation." He addressed himself chiefly to believers. I found I was one to whom this word of salvation was sent. An inexpressible hunger and thirst after full salvation took place in my soul. And I thought, surely I shall be filled therewith. But the question is, When? The answer was, If thou canst believe, now is the day of salvation. And I was as clearly convinced of unbelief, as I was before my justification. God told me his time was now. Unbelief told me it was not now. O the wickedness of a heart that is but partially renewed in the image of God!

As I formerly felt that I only wanted faith in order to be justified, so I now felt that I only wanted faith in order to be sanctified. But I knew every one that asketh receiveth. I therefore gave myself to prayer, nothing doubting but God would answer. For two days I prayed continually. I prayed in my shop: I prayed in the street: I prayed rising up: I prayed lying down. The Lord heard and answered me. At the end of two days, it seemed as if my strength failed me, and I could only say, "Lord, I

will believe: help thou my unbelief!" I was enabled to bring the words to the present moment. I felt that faith which bringeth salvation, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. In that moment I was as clearly saved from sin as ever I was justified. And this blessing was bestowed upon me only eight weeks after the former.

Surely when God gives any blessing, it is his will that we should keep it. But I did not keep this long. I fancied, because I had much love, I had much knowledge, and that therefore few could teach me. I forgot that I had need every moment of the intercession of Christ. And I fixed my own meaning on several texts of Scripture, which exposed me to a flood of enthusiasm. This brought on some loving opposition from my brethren, which was not always received in the spirit of meekness. And I sunk lower and lower, till I had no longer any pretence to perfect love. But notwithstanding my great unfaithfulness, God did not wholly withdraw himself from me. I still retained a sense of acceptance, which indeed I have not lost an hour since I first received it. But yet I sensibly felt, that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God. My natural tempers again prevailed, and I could not keep myself from idols. I was barely kept from outward sin. And this, I knew, was not by my own strength.

Toward the latter end of the year 1774, it pleased God to stir me up anew. I was deeply convinced of my fall. I again felt foolish desires, the fear of man, and various other evils in my heart. And I could truly say,—

"Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone!

Till that memorable day, December 12, 1774; yea, on the former part of that day, I was torn by unruly passions, by the love of the world, and a train of evils. Yet in the midst of all I poured out my soul to God in much prayer. In the midst of all a thought sprung up, "I will go to the Tabernacle." I went, being still in the spirit of prayer. Mr. Joss preached from part of the fourth chapter to the Romans. Although I could not agree with him, that "all be-

licvers are staggerers," yet his preaching so much below my experience was sanctified to me. I looked to God, and the spirit of supplication was poured into my soul. I was athirst for God, I opened my mouth wide, and indeed he filled it. He spoke to my heart, "I will cleanse thee from all thy filthiness and from all thine idols." These words passed my mind several times, before I attended to them. At length I started and thought, surely this is the voice of God to my soul. I determined to hold the promise fast, though Satan endeavoured to tear it from me. This was about the middle of the sermon, the latter part of which was made very useful to me, the Spirit of God applying it in a higher sense than the preacher intended it. I went home, praying all the way, my whole attention being fixed upon—

The sure prophetic word of grace,
That glimmer'd through my nature's night.

I then felt unspeakable happiness in my deliverance. But a query came. "How will it be to-morrow?" It was answered in my heart, "To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." The next morning I rose to the preaching with ease, which before seemed an impossibility. In the course of a day there are not wanting in a family many little trying circumstances. Some temptations also to pride, to anger, and to self-will, presented themselves. But in all things I was more than conqueror. The fear of man was likewise removed, so that I could reprove, warn, and exhort every one. Meantime the promises flowed into my heart without obstruction. I easily perceived the change was universal, and felt that I was "cleansed from all my idols, and from all my filthiness." And I seemed to have light equal to my love; so that in one week I had a clearer insight into the life of faith, than I had had for several years. Thus Jesus saves his people from their sins.

My heart being thus set at liberty, a thought which I had years before, that it was the will of God I should be a preacher, returned with greater force than ever.—But I remembered, "He that believeth shall not make haste," and was thoroughly willing to wait God's time. I knew it was God's work, and his only, to make a preacher

of the Gospel, and that the more passive I was, the more fit I should be for the Master's use. In this peaceful frame of mind I remained, attending to the leading of his Spirit, and the opening of his providence, till not long after I went with some of our friends to a work house, where one of them preached. I felt great love to the poor people. As we were coming back one of our brethren asked me, "Are you willing to give them a sermon next Sunday morning?" I looked upon this to be a call of Providence, and therefore durst not refuse it. So I went and spoke to them from these words, "Ask and it shall be given you:" and I had a testimony within that it pleased God. Not long after, being exceeding weary in body, and having much business upon my hands, my spirit sunk, and I thought, "How is it possible for me to work till twelve o'clock at night? Besides, I am to preach at the work house in the morning." Just then the power of the Highest overshadowed me, and God spoke with power, "Lo! I am with thee always." The words pointed me at first to the work I had to do the next morning. But I thought also, should not I expect power *now* to carry me through my business? Weariness vanished away, and I went on swiftly, for the grace of God carried me. In the morning I preached as I had appointed: when I had done, I thought, I have made a stammering piece of work: but that word was immediately applied, "The tongue of the stammerer shall speak plainly." From this time I constantly attended the work house, but was particularly careful to keep the life of God in my own soul. I saw religion was neither more nor less than the constant union of the soul with God, and used all diligence to shun those rocks on which I had split before. I laboured to retain a sense of the littleness of my understanding, that I might always be open to instruction: and I depended not on my grace or gifts, but upon the Giver, living by faith in the Son of God.

As to the acting in a more public manner, I was entirely passive. I thought, if ever I do speak in public, I will be a preacher of God's making. In this spirit I continued till going to the Foundry one Saturday evening, I was informed that Mr. Wesley had appointed me to preach

there the next morning. I was surprised : but I thought, How can I honour my spiritual father unless I do what he orders me? So I went and preached on, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple." For a minute after I had named my text I trembled and could hardly utter a word. But I then found help, and spoke about forty minutes without any difficulty. Afterward I preached at Bow, on, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." And after a few trials I was convinced that, provided his soul be truly alive to God, the life of a preacher of the Gospel is the happiest life under heaven. I was now received into the number of local preachers. But I was fearful of putting myself forward, lest I should run before the Spirit. I never asked to preach at this or the other place, receiving the appointment of the assistant as a call from God. How happy would it be for the preachers, if they were all to follow the guidance of the Spirit, rather than their own will! Then nothing would come amiss. In a few months I preached in all the chapels in London, and when summer came on, in Moorfields, Marybonefields, and on Tower-hill : all the time 'blessing God for being kept from that false humility which shackles so many! My unfitness never stood in my way. Indeed I cannot but think all who are called of God to preach, are in some way fitted for the work : if not, the Lord of the vineyard does not know his business! However, sure I am, that humility of this kind is inconsistent with perfect love. I believe genuine humility makes a man invulnerable by the praise or dispraise of men.

From this time I continued to preach, and to labour diligently with my hands, that I might provide things honest in the sight of all men, till in August, 1777, I was called to suffer the will of God, being about three months under a surgeon's hands; he at last pronounced the case desperate; of which my wife informed me with tears in her eyes. In that instant three scriptures came to my mind : "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. The things impossible with men are possible with God. The right hand of the Lord hath the pre-eminence;" and I was fully assured I should not die : meantime I suffered the will of God willingly, cheerfully, joyfully. By this illness

I was cured of another disorder, which otherwise must have been my death, and was made more capable, both inwardly and outwardly, of doing the work I was called to. When I gathered strength I was advised to go into the country: and being recommended to our friends at Dorking, I spent sixteen days with them. May God repay them for the love they showed me! When I came back I was quite capable of my business, which I cheerfully entered upon, being equally willing to work at my trade or to preach the Gospel. But in the latter end of July, 1780, one asking me whether I had no thoughts of being a travelling preacher, I owned I had: and having just buried two of my children, I thought the time was come. I was accordingly proposed at the Bristol conference, and appointed for the Salisbury circuit. Many of my *prudent* friends blamed me much for leaving a quiet, comfortable business. But I had counted the cost. So on Monday, September 11, I set out for Salisbury. When I left my wife and three children, I felt a mixture of joy and grief, but with a full resignation to the will of God. I have been about five months in my circuit, and am more convinced that this is the pleasantest life under heaven.— Though I have left my wife and children, and dearest friends, and house and business, and wander about, chiefly on foot, through cold and rain, I find my mind uninterruptedly happy: I feel a constant witness of the work wrought in my heart by the Spirit of holiness. I have received in this world a hundredfold: and I know that when my earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, I have a building of God; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!

MR. DUNCAN WRIGHT.

I WAS born May, 1736, in the kirk town of Fortingale, near the river Lyon, and not far from the lovely banks of the “soft-winding Tay,” Breadalbin, Perthshire. I claim kindred to the Stuart, M'Donald, and M'Gregor families;

perhaps more famed in story for martial exploits than for any extraordinary attainments in religion.

It might have been better for me to have had a hardy Highland education ; but of this I was deprived by the removal of my parents to Edinburgh, when I was very young. Here I had the best education my father could give, who was my only schoolmaster. He was esteemed a pretty good scholar ; but I doubt knew little of the life and power of religion. Yet he prayed with us at times, made us learn the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and took care of us to the best of his knowledge. I lost him early, which was a loss indeed ! For my mother, being too easy and indulgent, let us have our own way, which led us to all the follies and sins we were capable of. I do not remember that any creature took any pains to instruct me till I was near twenty years of age, but old Lady D., of Preston Field, who at times advised me as well as she could. And yet the Lord did not leave me without drawings from above : for having a bookish inclination, I read and wept very often till my head ached, and hardly knew what ailed me ; only I wanted to be a Christian, and to be easy and happy, but knew not how. Had any living Christian taken a little pains to inform me, I doubt not but I should have embraced the offers of mercy long before I did. Indeed I never felt any spirit of opposition to religion and religious persons. For as I had neither the form nor the power of religion myself, I knew I had little reason to speak an unkind word of those that had any appearance of either.

I was from my infancy feeble and tender : yet, having many relations in the army, no employment would relish with me but a soldier's life ; hence my mother never could prevail with me to follow any regular business, and this exposed me to vain and wicked company. Yet, having some tenderness of conscience left, repenting and sinning, resolving and breaking through my resolutions, made my life a weariness indeed. So in order to be happy, I resolved to see the world in a military life. Hence I enlisted, the latter end of 1754, in the tenth regiment of foot. None of my friends knew what was become of me till I wrote to my mother from Limerick, in Ireland. My mother being infirm, did not survive this long ; she died the

spring following : and I fear my disobedience hastened her departure. An awakened conscience will smart, first or last, for this sin among others, stubbornness and disobedience to parents. So did mine ; for the day I enlisted, I thought, now I have done for soul and body : for I could form no conception how a soldier could be religious.

In the summer of 1755 we encamped near the city Cashel ; eight regiments of foot, and two of horse, where William Coventry, a corporal in the Royal Scotch, frequently preached. I heard him once, and felt nothing but a kind of wonder at his courage in preaching among such a set as we were. I little thought that, in less than four years, I should be engaged in the same work in another camp.

We returned to Limerick for winter quarters, where I began to consider, (as the soldiers had then a great deal of leisure time in the winter,) how I should pass my tedious moments ; I could play at cards, and other games, (then common among the soldiers, but now happily suppressed,) but I seldom liked my company. For though I could swear sometimes, yet I could not relish so much of it as they were addicted to. I therefore bought and borrowed all the plays, novels, and romances I could lay my hands upon ; reading late and early. And my reading had this effect, at least, that it kept me out of worse diversions ; and gave my mind a turn above such intemperance and lewdness as were too common among men of my rank.

At last an old soldier, in the same barrack room with me, found fault with me for spending my time and spoiling my eyes in reading such trash. I thought, I will show you I can read religious books as well as others. But I had none of my own. I borrowed two from one of our soldiers. One of them was the Marrow of Modern Divinity, which being wrote by way of dialogue, attracted my attention ; and before I read it half through, I was truly though gently convinced that I was a lost sinner, and that Christ was all I wanted to make me easy, satisfied, and happy.

Now it was that a deep sense of my time, youth, and health, spent in sin and folly ; my ingratitude to God, the

best of fathers; my slighting of Christ so long, and grieving the blessed Spirit, melted my heart, and made my eyes a fountain of tears. I awoke as from a dream, and saw all about me, like the men of Sodom, blind, and groping about for happiness; or asleep, with storms of wrath ready to burst upon their heads. The immediate consequence was, a distaste to all my books and diversions.—I exchanged them for religious tracts: and having a praying heart, it soon found a praying place; for as I had no place of retirement in my room, I found a covered battery on the castle wall. This soon became my closet; and when on guard, I used to cover my head with my watch cloak, and stopping my ears with my fingers, spent many a happy moment in converse with God, weeping and making supplication.

Although I now forsook, in a sense, all for Christ, yet there was, at times, such a mixture of seriousness and levity, that some might conclude I had no tincture of the fear of God. But my trifling in the day made me often water my couch with tears at night. But I had none to guide me; I did not know a man among seven hundred that had any knowledge of such a work as I now felt in my mind. There was one, indeed, who I thought must have something in him, because he was sober, and read good books. But when I began to tell a little of what I felt, I found him an entire stranger to every thing of the kind. However, the Lord made up the want of Christian fellowship by sending me such books, from time to time, as surprisingly suited my case; particularly Alleine's Alarm, which proved of wonderful service to me. Among his directions for conversions, he advises the reader to enter into covenant with God; a form of which he has there given. I took the advice, set apart a day of fasting and prayer, wrote the covenant and signed it, and it was not long before the Lord showed me he did not despise the day of small things.

There was a society of Methodists in the town, but I knew them not; and when I did, they were such objects of universal contempt, that I hardly knew what to make of them; however the last night of this year I ventured to go, and heard Mr. Oddie. I likewise began the year 1756 with them, and from that time never missed an op-

portunity of hearing, morning and evening. I think it was in April, this year, that the Lord justified me by his grace. I used to spend all my time in bed, while awake, in weeping and prayer: and it was in one of these weeping nights that in an instant the Lord brought me out of darkness into his marvellous light. I did not know then what to call it; but its effects were many; I found an uncommon concern for the souls of the soldiers; and the sight of a Methodist used to set my heart on fire with love. Yet for a half a year, not a soul of them spoke a word to me, though I sometimes threw myself in their way. For, much did I long to be acquainted with them, but my shyness was such that I could not break through to speak to them.

Mr. John Wesley and Mr. Thomas Walsh made us a visit this summer; and O what a heaven upon earth did I feel in hearing them! and yet I could not speak to them for my life. At length that serious man, Mr. Thomas Seccombe, took notice of me, and when he was about to leave Limerick, desired Sidney Hoey, (a mother in Israel she was to me and many of the soldiers,) to get acquainted with me. She brought me to her house, and the same day to a class meeting, which was a day of gladness to me; for I had often found Solomon's words fulfilled, "Wo to him that is alone when he falleth." For when I fell into perplexities and temptations, I had no one to help me; but now I found the real benefit of having fellowship with a loving people.

Part of 1757 and 58 I spent at Dublin, and found their fellowship there also of very great service. The preachers were lively, and faithful lovers of discipline. The society retained much of their simplicity and teachableness, and were in a good degree prepared for the blessed revival which followed some time after, under Mr. John Manners.

It was of uncommon advantage to me to be among the Methodists at a time when both the preachers and people loved all our discipline and practised it. I saw the blessed consequences; for few cared to stay among us, but such as retained their fervour for the whole of religion. False brethren especially were soon tired, and went to the Independents, Anabaptists, or Moravians. But with great simplicity we used to crowd to the sacrament of St. Pa-

trick's in Dublin; or the cathedral at Limerick, every Sabbath. These were happy times to me; for although I was bred a Presbyterian, (if I was bred any thing,) yet the love of God threw down the wall of partition, and made me love to be there where I found most of the people of God. I soon saw our plan to be more noble than any poor narrow dissenting scheme whatever, as intending the good of thousands and tens of thousands, in the great bodies of the established Churches; and I am still convinced that our present situation is infinitely better calculated for general good than the best planned separation that can be conceived.

What occasioned my commencing a preacher, was as follows:—In September, 1758, we returned to Limerick; and as government resolved to shoot a deserter in every city, *in terrorem*, the lot fell on a young man in our regiment to die in Limerick. His name was Joseph Newton; he was a Derbyshire man, twenty-two years of age. I longed to talk with him; but as he was kept in a public guard house, with no place of retirement, I could not tell how to speak or pray with him, among so many people. But when I found that the adjutant had been to inform him that he must die on Monday, (this was on the Tuesday before,) I saw I had no time to lose. I went in, and found him weeping as if his heart would break, and reading the *Whole Duty of Man* with all his might: like a drowning man catching at any thing to save him. I spoke a few words to him then, and again in the evening, though with uncommon reluctance, there being many soldiers around us. I prayed with him, and found very great freedom to speak to him, and to all that were present. He had no plea, but saw himself an undone sinner without help, and almost without hope. Some of us visited him twice or thrice a day, and on Thursday his soul was set at liberty. From that time he witnessed a good confession to all that spoke to him. Every one who saw him go to the place where he was shot, could not but admire the serene joy that appeared in his countenance. He said but little; but his calm, happy death made a deep impression on many of our soldiers; for they could not but discern the difference between him and one they saw die awhile before at Dublin, who showed the greatest reluc-

tance, the field officer of the day being obliged to ride up to him several times to tell him he *must* die ; while Joseph Newton was not above ten minutes on his knees before he dropped the signal, and went to paradise.

I thought now was the time to try what could be done among the soldiers. I therefore told several, that as many as had a mind might come to my room every night after roll-calling, and I would sing, read, and pray with them as well as I could. They came and crowded my room, and in a little while I had a class of them. But about the beginning of the year 1759, I was ordered for Scotland on the recruiting service. I found this not to be easy work for a Christian, yet, through mercy, I was kept from outward sin.

After an absence of four months, the French being expected to invade Ireland, we were ordered to join the regiment, which lay encamped near Kilkenny, and I found my little flock, having had no one to look after them, were all scattered. The first morning we met (in a field adjoining) there were but three of us. But our number increased every time we met ; and before our camp broke up, I had a little society gathered again. And here it was that I got the name of a preacher : for it being frequently late in the evenings before we could meet, before I had sung and prayed, our light was gone out, so that I could not see to read, but was obliged to say something to them without a book, or send them away empty.

It was well I did not begin to preach among very knowing men, for they might soon have silenced me, as a little thing would have done it : but here there was none to hinder me but the commanding officer, and he did not choose to do it. Though he did not like the Methodists, yet he wanted us all to be very good, as we did not know how soon our valour might be tried by the French.—Therefore we had very strict orders against swearing, drunkenness, &c., but these orders did not effect any great reformation. When we left the camp, as we still expected an invasion, we were scattered abroad in cantonments all over the south of Ireland. This hurt such of us as were weak in the faith very much. None can tell, but such as have tried, how hard it is for a soldier to stand his ground among so many unreasonable, as well as ungodly men ;

for such were most of the officers as well as soldiers—men whose tender mercies were cruel.

I had myself suffered much loss in my mind for a year, and consequently had little inclination for preaching.—Hence when we got the route for Galway I was not at all sorry that there was no society to enlist me to preach among them. Even my friends among the officers were much concerned for me : as many sergeants were preferred to commissions, they said, they doubted they could do nothing for me, as I made myself so ridiculous. Indeed this did not move me. But my unhappiness of mind was the great hinderance to my preaching. Yet in Galway it was that I had the most clear, undoubted seals to my mission, in the conviction and conversion of souls who had never heard any other Methodist preacher. Some of them are a comfort to me to this day ; and some are fallen asleep in Jesus.

In 1761 we marched for Dublin again, and the following year back to Galway. All this time, from 1758 to 1763, I walked in darkness, and had no light. I fell into it by degrees, but by what particular thing I am at a loss to know. But this I know, my case was truly deplorable ; and yet I did not give way to any known sin ; neither did I miss any means of grace. Nay, I often went to the Lord's table, when, to all sense and feeling, I was as dead as a stone. My gracious tears were all dried up. My stony heart could not melt. And yet I heard the greatest preachers, read the best books I knew, and conversed or corresponded with the most gracious Christians I could hear of. Nay, I frequently exhorted or preached the whole time ; yea, and in that season had apparent success to my labours. I remark this to refute an idle conceit, "that none are fit to teach others, but such as are happy themselves." I know that many times, though I forgot it while preaching, I was as miserable as a devil, both before and after. And it was often suggested to me, "Judas may cast out devils, and notwithstanding all this, be only an outcast." I often saw myself like one enclosed all around "with hewn stone, my strength and my hope perished from the Lord." As I knew very little of myself when the Lord justified me, he saw good to show me now my utter helplessness, by leading me into the painful school of

self-knowledge. And a dull scholar I proved to be ; being five years in learning what others have learned in less than five months.

Yet notwithstanding my wretchedness, our little society at Galway was wonderfully blessed. As there was about this time a glorious revival in many parts of the three kingdoms, I communicated to them, from time to time, the intelligence I received of the work, and the fire soon kindled among them also. All were happy, or in earnest but me, and I durst tell very few my sad case, for fear of hurting them. This was often the language of my heart :

My soul in sin so rooted stands,
No common miracle can move,
I know my spirit's cure demands
The whole omnipotence of love.

But whether thou hast ever heal'd
A spirit so desperate as mine,
It lies, alas, from me conceal'd,
In lowest depth of love Divine.

If it be asked, what could induce me to continue in the means of grace ? I answer, I never doubted my former experience of the truth and reality of religion ; and (beside an unseen hand that upheld me) I retained a full conviction, that in the favour of God alone there was life and happiness. So I was determined to be happy in the favour of God, or refuse every other comfort. It was when I was thus in darkness, and in the deep, that the Lord, in a moment, “ restored to me the joy of his salvation.” This was like a plenteous shower upon a parched and dry land, that soon made my soul like a “ watered garden.” The Lord now “ led me into green pastures, beside the still waters.” What a change was this ! The soul that was before all tumult and confusion, was now all joy and peace through believing. This was about June, 1763. And yet I soon found I had not attained what J. Dillon and S. Hoey informed me they had attained, viz., “ a mind constantly stayed upon God, and kept in perfect peace.”

Being about this time confined to my room, by a violent inflammation in my cheek, my pain made me pray the more earnestly that the peace of God might keep my heart and mind also. The Lord heard, and gave me a

glorious answer. I felt such a sudden, and such a delightful change as I never before conceived possible. My joy was unspeakable; my hope full of immortality; and my peace flowed like a river. I then understood those words as I never did before, "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Just then we were ordered to the north of Ireland, to quell a set of rioters called the "hearts of oak." Being something better, I marched on till we came to Carrick on Shannon, when our surgeon told me I must go no farther, at the peril of my life. My excessive pain, and the being left behind, would at some other times have tried me sufficiently: but now,

"All was calm, and joy, and peace."

And here it was that I first understood how the blessed martyrs could clap their hands in the flames; for although for some nights my pain was excruciating, yet all was tranquillity within. The little society here, and the M'Neily family in particular, took remarkable care of me. "The Lord grant they may find mercy of him in that day."—This state continued several months; but having none to direct me, and not being sufficiently aware of the need there was for constant watchfulness and prayer, I fell by degrees from that heaven of love.

In the beginning of 1764 I was called to suffer a little for the testimony of Jesus. And indeed but a little; for what were a few threatenings, a little reproach and shame, a few stones, or rotten eggs, to what many of the dear servants of God have suffered even in this age? Our lieutenant colonel did not care what a soldier's religion was, provided he did his duty; but our major, a warm blunderer, to whom the command of the regiment was left for a time, thought it a disgrace to have a sergeant a preacher among them. He therefore resolved to drive me out of preaching if possible. I shall not enter upon a detail of the several means he used for this purpose, as I believe he was ashamed of them himself before I left him. He found me so much the soldier, however, as not to be frightened out of what I thought was my duty.

Yet I found it no easy matter to walk the streets of Newry, a gazing stock to both old and young. At last, as he found he could not prevent my preaching, he hit upon a method to get quit of me: namely, to put me into the tenth company, which was soon to be reduced. And thus it was that the Lord "thrust me out into the harvest:" for I was determined not to leave the army, till some clear providence set me free. Before the time came for the reduction of the company, some of the friendly officers wanted me to stay, and said they would get the major to put some old sergeant in my place. I begged they would not, and they acquiesced. Some of them, indeed, wished I could persuade all their men to be religious, for they had no trouble with the Methodist soldiers, but enough with the others. Yet they told me they feared what our enthusiasm would turn to: and mentioned Cromwell, who could preach and pray one part of the day, and kill and plunder the other. Never were words more applicable to these fearful men than the following:—

The same in your esteem,
Falsehood and truth ye join:
The wild pretender's dream
And real work Divine;
Between the substance and the show
No difference you can find,
For colours all, full well we know,
Are equal to the blind.

Were the chaplains men of real piety and courage, much good might be done in the army; but the chaplaincy is generally a kind of sinecure, and the care of souls is left to any worthless wretch, that will do it at an easy rate. When we lay in one city, the care of four or five regiments was left to an unhappy man, who was an object of common ridicule among the soldiers, for his perpetual drunkenness. But although my commanding officer could not hinder me from preaching, and God gave me to see the fruit of my labours, yet I was not thoroughly satisfied in my own mind that it was my duty to preach; but this spring, at Waterford, God revived his work wonderfully among that society, and set my mind free from every scruple; so that when Mr. Wesley wrote me word, that if I left the army, he had immediate work for me, I had no objection but the precarious state of my health: for by

preaching loud and long, and by reading at all hours, I had brought myself so low, that our surgeon sometimes thought me in a consumption. Mr. Wesley told me in his answer to my objection, "that our Master had all power in heaven, and in earth, and that as my day, so should my strength be." And in the latter end of 1764, I found myself at liberty to go where Providence directed.

I was now entering upon a new scene of life, and though I was now twenty-eight years of age, I was an utter stranger to mankind: hence I imagined that blunt honesty, with innocency, would bear me through any thing; but I have since learned that we need the wisdom of the serpent, as well as the innocence of the dove, in our dealings with men, even about their souls. I mention this as an apology for some parts of my conduct, which had not always a due mixture of calm wisdom; my native impetuosity often hurrying me beyond the bounds of moderation; a thing too common with well meaning, zealous young men. I would observe farther, that I was kept in such watchfulness and tenderness of conscience, nine years after I knew something of religion among the soldiery, as to my grief and shame I have not always retained since that period. I was then continually among the open enemies of religion, which partly obliged me to vigilance, but being since then chiefly among the professed friends of religion, how often have I been off my watch! O where are we safe beyond the power of sinning, but in paradise!

When I came to Dublin, our society and preachers received me in the kindest manner, and a comfortable time I spent with them that winter. One of our captains, without my knowledge, now recommended me to a late nobleman, who he told me had an easy place for me, and desired my answer in two or three days. I thanked him, and told him I had chosen another employment. Here I was acquainted with Dr. Davis, whose case is worth relating. He was formerly remarkable for a peculiar lively turn of wit on all occasions, and happy was the company that could get him to spend the evening with them. But being persuaded by a friend to hear John Carr, one of our local preachers, his companions, alas! lost their merry-andrew. He told me that he went to see the preacher,

merely to take him off, as he expressed it: "but," said he, "while I was leaning on my cane, looking at him through my fingers, during his first prayer an arrow went to my heart, which sent me home bruised and wounded." He then sought the true Physician, who soon brought him to a healthful mind. The regiment of dragoons, of which he was surgeon, marched into Dublin while I was there. One day, being at the soldiers' infirmary, a serious man, the porter of the house, one Francis May, said to him, Sir, we want prayer and a word of exhortation very much in this house; would you pray with two or three, sir, if I get them together? Really, Frank, said the doctor, "I never prayed in my life but with two or three serious people, and I know not how to begin with any other." Sir, said Frank, it is high time you should begin. Begin to-day, sir, begin now! The doctor was prevailed on. Away went Frank, and informed them through all the house, that Dr. Davis was going to preach to them. Down came every soul that could crawl; the sick, the lame, and the lazy, to the long room, where the chaplain used to read prayers. Away came Frank to the doctor. Now, sir, said he, "I have got a few of them." When the doctor came to the room door, and saw the place full, he was for going back. Nay, sir, said Frank, "You cannot go back for your life! There they are: the Lord has delivered them into your hands, and will you start from his work?" In short, the doctor went in, stood on a form, sung and prayed; and having his pocket Bible with him, he read a portion to them, discoursed an hour and a half, and from that time preached to the soldiers wherever he could. As I knew his dangerous situation, I was a little afraid for him. But God took care of him; for going to visit some prisoners in Newgate, who had a malignant fever, he caught the infection, and finished his course, rejoicing in God his Saviour.

We had several remarkable conversions while I was in Ireland. One or two more may be mentioned. We often think it lost labour to talk to a man about his soul while drunk; but I know to the contrary. I knew one in the north of Ireland, who, going home one summer evening, much in liquor, saw a crowd of people on a green at some distance; and imagining it to be a cock-fight, he would

see it before he went home. The preacher being in the application of his discourse said, "Are there any drunkards here?" &c. The poor fellow looking up, said, "Yes, I am one." At that instant he was seized with such concern for his soul, as never left him till he became a new man.

I add another remarkable case. We had a little society in the county of Wexford, who used to be much pestered with a Popish mob. They met in a long barn, with the door near one end. The rabble wanted sadly to know what they did at their private meetings; but as the barn belonged to one that was no Methodist, they durst not break open the door. At length they contrived that one of them should get into the barn before the people came, and let his companions in at a proper time. To conceal himself the better, he got into a sack, and lay down behind the door. When the society were all in, they fastened the door as usual. Soon after came the mob, hallooing and shouting to their friend to let them in; but God found other work for him; for being charmed with the first hymn, he thought it a thousand pities (as he afterward said) to disturb them while singing it. And when the prayer began, the power of God did so confound him that he roared out with might and main, and, not having power to get out of the sack, lay bawling and screaming. At last one ventured to see what was the matter, and helping him out, brought him up confessing his sins and crying for mercy, which was the beginning of a lasting work in his soul.

But to return. This winter, three of the preachers going to Chapel-Izod, where one of them was to preach, as there was room in the coach, they invited me to accompany them. A river through which we were to pass happened to overflow part of the road. Our coachman, thinking to drive in the most shallow water, drove near a wall; but the wheels turning on a large stone, upset us. Through mercy we got out, with little more damage than being well wet; but the coachman stood up to the neck, like one distracted crying "Murder! Murder!" At last he got out, and then I and two others (Mr. Johnson and Dempster) walked home, and were no worse.

In the spring, there being no preacher in the Waterford circuit, I went thither, and spent some time very agreea-

ably among my former acquaintances. And now it was that I saw what spirit many of the Irish papists were of. While I carried a sword by my side, few of them cared to speak their minds ; but now, that restraint being removed, several of them told me to my face that they thought it would be doing both God and the Church service to burn all such as me in one fire ! The infatuation of many of them, owing to the ignorance they are kept in, cannot be described ; for upon the least pretence, and often without any, they rise in large parties, well armed, to destroy the lives and properties of their neighbours, oppose the magistracy, and even insult the army.

About this time, a party of the light horse, being on foot, were conveying one of the "Whiteboys" to Kilkenny jail. In going through a village, the papists crossed the way with a mock funeral. When they had got the soldiers in the midst, they threw down their coffin full of stones, and fell on old and young, with the greatest fury. The soldiers defended themselves till the sergeant and three or four more were killed, and several desperately wounded. For this, five of them were hanged at Kilkenny. They all died "innocent (they said) as the child unborn !" So did five more, who were executed a little while before, for burning a mill, and burying the miller up to the neck. I could not understand, at first, how most of the papists that die here, by the hands of the executioner, die declaring their innocence, till I found out the secret : having confessed all their crimes to the priest, and received his absolution, they believed themselves guiltless, and were forbid to make confession to the heretics. However, we had the comfort to see several of them brought to the experience of real Christianity. And there is no doubt but if there were a few preachers of Mr. Walsh's spirit, we should see many more.

Mr. Wesley having signified to me, some time before, that I might travel with him if I had a mind, I gladly embraced the opportunity, and met him at Limerick, in June, 1765. This and the next year I had an opportunity of seeing most of our large societies in the three kingdoms ; and had my health, capacity, and industry, kept pace with my opportunities, it might have been a time of extraordinary improvement. Beside all other advantages, I had

constantly before me such an example of redeeming time as I hope will be of service to me while I live. But however profitable my travelling with Mr. Wesley might be, as the exercise was too much, I was obliged to give it up. It was also of service to me to spend some time in London, among some of our old, happy Methodists; who bore with my weaknesses, and by their prayers and example confirmed me more and more in the truth as it is in Jesus.

What the Lord has been doing by me in Kent, Essex, Norwich, Manchester, Macclesfield, in the Yarm and Thirsk circuits, and in Scotland, is known to him. I bless God that I have seen the work prosper and increase in most of the circuits I have been in, not indeed in consequence of my preaching, so much as by some regard to our discipline, and the labour of my colleagues. I have been happy in having those in general with me who were not drones, but hearty in the work of God. And their love to discipline has not been labour in vain; to God alone be all the glory!

Before I conclude, I must not forget to mention one circumstance in order to encourage others, and to justify the observation, "That we hardly know what we are capable of, till we are put to the trial." When I was in Scotland, I remarked that many of the clergy were men of sense and piety, and took real pains in their work. And yet there was in many places a want of care and zeal for the spiritual welfare of the poor Highlanders. Many of these coming for employment to the larger towns, were destitute of all help for their souls; as they did not understand English. In Edinburgh and Glasgow there have been places of worship built for them, within these few years, and well supplied: but in Aberdeen, Perth, and Greenock, they still had none to help. When Mr. M^r. Nab went to Scotland, in 1769, he began to preach to them as well as he could, and wanted me to come to his help. Mr. Wesley accordingly appointed me for Scotland at the ensuing conference, and desired me to try to recover my Erse: but of this I had no hope; as I could not read a verse of it, and never spoke two minutes in it on religious subjects in my life. However, when I came to Perth, and saw their forlorn condition, several motives induced me

to make a trial. I therefore bought a New Testament in the modern Gallic, and got one of the society who could read it, to give me some instructions. By Christmas I had made such progress that my teacher was positive I could preach in it, and would needs invite the Highlanders to come and hear me. But I knew my deficiency better than he did; however, I was prevailed upon to let him invite them. He gave out the psalm, and sung it for me. When I began to pray in Erse, I should have been set fast, had I not learned the Lord's prayer beforehand. When I began to speak, I was often obliged to break off, and address the people in English. But, by the grace of God, in less than four years I could officiate in that language, two hours together, without a word of English.—While we were thus employed, the ministers in Perth, and in several other places, wished us good luck in the name of the Lord.

This was by far the most delightful work I ever had. But it was often hard enough, as I commonly preached at Greenock, in English, at seven in the morning: then spent two hours, from ten to twelve, with the Highlanders: walked to Port-Glasgow, and preached in the streets at four; then walked back to Greenock, and preached at six o'clock, and then met the society. Although by this means I had many an aching head, and pained breast, yet it was delightful to see hundreds attending to my blundering preaching, with streaming eyes, and attention still as night; or to hear them, in their simple way, singing the praises of God in their own tongue. If ever God said to my heart, "Go, and I will be with thee," it was then, when, with much trembling and deep sighs, I have gone to preach to them, hardly knowing what to say. I extol the name of my adorable Master, that my labours were not in vain. How gladly would I have spent my life with these dear souls! But my health would not permit it; so I was obliged to leave them.

To conclude: how graciously did my heavenly Father strive with me by his Spirit even from my infant days! and when I was an outcast, and lost as to any thing in religion, he reclaimed the wanderer, and brought me to his fold; then led me into the wilderness to show me my heart; healed my backslidings, comforted and fortified

me for sufferings ; and, knowing my feebleness, led me gradually on to preach to those who most needed my assistance ! And when he saw a little affliction needful, he sent it. And a profitable time it proved to me ; all thanks to the Sender ! I have since seen such beauty in holiness, and in the imitation of Christ, and have had such discoveries of the boundless love of God as I never had before. O for an eternity to praise him in ! If ever man could say the following lines, surely I may :—

Pardon for all that I have done,
My mouth as in the dust I hide,
And glory give to God alone,
My God for ever pacified.

MR. ROBERT WILKINSON.

BEFORE hearing the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, I was often terrified in dreams and visions of the night. Sometimes I thought I was falling down steep precipices ; at others, that the devil was standing over me to take me away immediately. At such times I have oftentimes awakened, shrieking in such a manner as terrified all who heard me. Afterward I heard the Gospel for a season at Brookhope, in the county of Durham ; but the people not receiving the joyful sound, the servants of God forsook the place. I was left with much uneasiness on my mind ; what I formerly delighted in was now hateful to me. I could play no more on the violin, or at cards, nor sing vain songs ; neither had I a desire to speak any more than I was forced to. The people saw my distress, but not knowing God, could not point out a cure. In this condition I continued for some weeks. I began to read religious books, and likewise to bow my knees before God in secret ; sometimes I could weep much, but having no one to direct me, after a time I got

back into folly, and pursued my evil practices with more eagerness than before. About four years after I was called to live in Weardale-Chapel. I then heard the Methodists very frequently. I was often softened under the word. I never found a desire to mock the people as many do: but rather stood in awe of them. But all this while I continued in my sins. The first Sunday in Lent, 1767, I heard, as usual, a Methodist preacher in the afternoon. I did not then find that the word made any impression upon me. But at night, on my bed, the Lord cut me to the heart, and I could not help roaring for the disquietness of my soul. I then felt I must perish eternally, unless some way to escape were found which I knew not of. Immediately I wished for the Methodists to pray with me; but in particular for a young man, Stephen Watson, who is now in glory. [From the time he knew Jesus he was a pattern to all the society. And after having walked four years in the light of God's countenance, he departed in the full assurance of faith; having testified, for many months before his death, that the blood of Jesus had cleansed him from all sin. His last words were, "Glory be to God for ever and ever! Amen and Amen!"]

One morning I fell down on my knees to ask forgiveness for my many offences, and continued to cry night and day. My burden increased, and temptations were very strong. I then began to compare myself with the most sinful of my companions, and with other notorious sinners I had heard of; but I could find no equal. I said, from the ground of my heart, of all the sinners under heaven, I am the chief. The enemy then suggested that I was guilty of a sin which God would never pardon.—Tongue cannot express the distress I then felt. The heart knoweth its own bitterness. I thought never man suffered what I did. That saying, "A dreadful sound in his ears," continually followed me. I found the enemy ready day and night to devour me. When in private prayer I thought he had hold of my clothes. For many nights he suggested, if I prayed, he would appear and tear me in pieces. Yet I durst not cease to pray, though my prayers were mostly made up of sighs and groans. One day, drawing toward evening, the enemy came in as a flood, and the temptation

was to put an end to a wretched life. I resisted, but it continued to come as quick as lightning, and I was afraid that the tempter would prevail, so that I durst not carry a penknife about me. That was the only time I was banished from private prayer, because I durst not stay alone. That night we met our class ; I then cried out to one of my brethren, who was waiting for me to go with him to the meeting, O Cuthburt ! I am driven to distraction ! He spoke to me as comfortably as he could ; but as we walked together, I felt as if one was hanging on the skirts of my clothes. After the first prayer was over, it was with difficulty I rose from my knees. When the leader asked how I found the state of my soul, I answered, I am left without one spark of hope that God will ever have mercy on me. No, said he, you are not ; for if you were, you would not now be using the means of grace. He encouraged me to follow on ; but I still found no comfort. All the time of my convictions I had but very little ease, and when I had, I had a fear, almost equal to my pain, lest I should fall back into sin, or speak peace when God did not. O how I longed for deliverance from sin ! I often cried, Lord, if I am for ever banished from thy presence, let me not sin again. Not long after, that text in the 51st Psalm followed me, "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." I thought if God did pardon me, he could refuse none ; but the foulest on this side hell might come and welcome. But this was the sting, I thought he would not. However, I kept using the means, and went frequently among the Methodists, to get them to pray with me. And I would have been glad if they had asked me to stay all night, but shame would not let me tell them so. I often thought I never could get over another night. My neighbours said I was beside myself, for I could not rest in my bed. I often rose and wandered in the fields, weeping and bewailing my desperate state. But, blessed be God, he that wounds can heal.

In the beginning of July, as Stephen Watson and I were sitting together, he had a volume of the Christian Library in his hand, out of which he read one of Mr. Rutherford's letters. When he had done, Stephen, said I, I find as it were a melting warmth in my breast. So do

I too, said he. He then asked, Can you not believe that God has pardoned your sins? No, said I; I dare not : on which I immediately lost my comfort.

Sunday, the 12th of July, Joseph Watson preached in the chapel in Weardale. He gave out that hymn,

All ye that pass by
To Jesus draw nigh,
To you is it nothing that Jesus should die ?
Your ransom and peace,
Your surety he is,
Come, see if there ever was sorrow like his.
For you and for me
He pray'd on the tree,
The prayer is accepted, the sinner is free.

Then all within me cried out,—

The sinner am I,
Who on Jesus rely,
And come for the pardon God cannot deny.

I then believed that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven all my sins, and found that peace which arises from a sense of reconciliation. The people of God who knew my distress, perceived by my countenance that the Lord was gracious to me, before I had the opportunity to tell them. I then went rejoicing home, and could not help telling what God had done for my soul. It was long before my faith was tried. One of our brethren, a Calvinist, lent me a book. As I read, I thought Mr. Wesley was quite in the wrong; and I found something in me that rose against him: yet one thing I remember I could not swallow, which was, the author asserted that a sense of inbred sin would reconcile us to death. No, said Mr. Wesley, nothing but perfect love. Indeed I could not persuade myself that the sting of death could reconcile us to death itself. However, I read and reasoned myself miserable. Yet the Lord gave me grace to wrestle with him in prayer; and every day I found more or less the witness of my sonship. I was then afraid if I sought after holiness, I should rob Christ of his glory. Some of our people hearing that I read that book, and conversed with the man who lent it, took it for granted that I was prejudiced against the doctrine of perfection and those that preached it. They told this to my band leader. I went one Sunday morning,

as usual, at seven o'clock, to meet my band, and found myself in a peaceful frame of mind. No sooner did the leader begin to pray, than he cried, "Lord, never suffer us to be prejudiced against thy servants, seeing that thy will is our sanctification." I found, as it were, something in me saying, He means me. When he spoke his experience, he expressed the same thing; on which I said, It is me you mean. He answered, "What I have said, I have said." I then found violent prejudice against him. My peace was gone. My soul was torn in pieces within me. I told one of our people as we went home, how my leader had behaved toward me. I did not regard breaking the band rules, because I was determined never to meet in a band any more. I had no rest: though I could not give up my confidence in God; nevertheless my corruptions boiled so within me that I could have fought with a feather.

On Friday night we had preaching. I went to it like one possessed with a legion of devils. Afterward the bands met, and the preacher earnestly exhorted all present to look for the second blessing, and insisted that it might be received. Now, thought I, if there is such a thing, none can stand more in need of it than I do. But the enemy suggested, "There are those that have known God several years, and have not attained; and shalt thou be delivered who hast been justified only a few months?"—Immediately I found power to resist the temptation, and said within myself, God is not tied to time. No sooner did that thought pass through my heart than the power of God seized me. I found I could not resist, and therefore turned myself over upon the seat: I cannot express how I was. I found such a travail in my soul as if it would burst from the body. I continued so till I was motionless and insensible for a season. But as I was coming to myself I found such an emptying, and then such a heaven of love springing up in my soul, as I had never felt before: with an application of these blessed words, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." If possible, I could have put my band leader into my heart. The book I mentioned before had pleased me so well, that I had given orders to him that lent it to me, to buy me one of them. But no

sooner did God work this change in my soul, than I found an utter aversion to it, and told the man, You must not buy it; for I shall never read it more.

In the year 1768 I was sent to call sinners to repentance, in and about the city of Carlisle. Here I was much persecuted; but blessed be God, he delivered me out of the hands of all my enemies, and gave me several seals to my ministry.

[Thus far Mr. Wilkinson lived to write himself. One of his fellow labourers added what follows.]

My acquaintance with Mr. Wilkinson was very short. The first time I ever saw him was a little above three years ago. The next time was after last Bristol conference. He was there appointed to labour with me in and about Grimsby. When we met in the circuit we were both in health; but the day before our quarterly meeting I was taken very ill of a fever; however, the next morning I ventured to set out for the meeting; but having fifteen miles to ride, it was with much difficulty I got safe thither. And then I was unable to attend either the lovefeast or the watch night. But I shall never forget the prayer Mr. Wilkinson put up for me at the close of the lovefeast, "That the Lord would spare me a little longer, and raise me up again to labour in his vineyard." His prayer pierced the heavens, the power of God came down upon the people like a torrent of rain. They were so affected that they wept and rejoiced abundantly. Immediately I shared with them: although I was not in the same room, the Divine presence broke my heart to pieces. My soul overflowed with love, and my eyes with tears. I know not that I was ever so powerfully and suddenly affected under any person's prayer, except on the day I was converted to God. Immediately I had faith to believe the Lord would raise me up again, and for several minutes it appeared to me as if I was perfectly well. The next day I went along with him to Louth; and in that time we had a good deal of conversation together, which chiefly turned upon these two points, viz., predestination and Christian perfection. He told me, with sorrow of heart, how often he had been grieved for the immense hurt that he had seen done by the preaching of unconditional predestination, as it blocked up the way of repentance; weakened the found-

ation of diligence ; damped the fervour of believers after holiness ; and had a tendency to destroy it root and branch. He likewise very warmly expressed his love for Bible holiness, saying, it was the delight of his soul to press after it himself, and to enforce it upon others ; and that while he was doing this, the Lord blessed him most in his labour, and shone clearest upon the work he had wrought in his own soul. He signified to me that the Lord had circumcised his heart to love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength : and I believe at that time he was full of faith and the Holy Ghost.

He was truly meek and lowly of heart ; and little, and mean, and vile in his own eyes. I found my mind amazingly united to him, for the time we were together, like the soul of David and his beloved Jonathan. I loved him much for the mind of Christ I saw in him, and for his zeal for the Lord of hosts. We parted at Louth, and I endeavoured, with the fever upon me, to creep along to Tetford to preach : but it was with much trouble I went through my discourse. That night the fever seized upon me more violently, and never left me for near a month. About a week after, Mr. Wilkinson came to Tetford to see me. We spent about three hours together very profitably. We then both of us prayed, and commended each other to God.

A few days after we parted, he was taken ill of the fever, and could not lest till he came to his wife at Grimsby ; where he lay ill for four or five weeks. He then appeared to be recovering fast, and walked about a little : but he suddenly relapsed, and was carried off in about a week. He bore all his afflictions with great patience, frequently lifting up his heart to God, and repeating these words : " But he knoweth the way I take : when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept ; and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips ; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food," Job xxiii. When he perceived that he should die, he exhorted his wife to cast all her care upon the Lord ; and encouraged her to believe that his grace was sufficient for her. He then prayed for her and

his two children, earnestly entreating the Lord to protect them in this troublesome world, and to supply all their wants. He next prayed fervently for Mr. Wesley, that the presence of the Lord might continue with him all his days, and crown him at last with eternal glory. He then remembered his three fellow labourers in the circuit, praying that the Redeemer would assist us in the great work: that he would go forth with and bless the labours of all the preachers, and that the kingdom of the Redeemer might spread to the ends of the earth, and preserve them until they join the Church triumphant.

In the night season he had a severe conflict with Satan, and his spirit wrestled with God in prayer. Yea, he was in agony, as he said afterward. At last the tempter fled, and he seemed as if he was admitted into heaven, to converse with God, with angels, and saints. He suddenly waked his wife (who was in the same room) and said, "Thou hast been sleeping, but I have been in heaven.—O what has the Lord discovered to me this night! O the glory of God! the glory of God in heaven! the celestial city! the New Jerusalem! O the lovely beauty! the happiness of paradise! God is all love; he is nothing but love! O help me to praise him! O help me to praise him! I shall praise him for ever! I shall praise him for ever!" So Robert Wilkinson departed this life in peace, on Friday, December 8th, about eleven o'clock, 1780.

It seemed a great providence that he died on the market day, when a number of friends out of the country were present, who quickly published, in their little villages, that a funeral sermon would be preached on Sunday. The house was well filled, and the Lord made it a solemn time. I believe there was scarce a dry-eye in the congregation. I have often taken notice how the Lord makes the triumphant death of good men a peculiar blessing to his children, who are left behind; so it was at this time. The people of God were remarkably blessed in hearing the dying testimony of our dear friend. The worldly people and the backsliders also were cut to the heart. At the conclusion of the sermon I dropped these words:—Earth has lost, and heaven has gained a child of God. Let us pray the Lord to add another to the Church militant. We did so; and the Lord answered our prayer, by setting

a young man's soul at liberty, so that he went from the solemn place, as the shepherds from the heavenly vision, blessing, praising, and glorifying God.

The minister of the parish behaved exceeding kind ; he came to the preaching house, stayed awhile, and then walked slowly before the corpse ; while the people sung a hymn of praise. When we arrived at the church, one of our friends asked him if we might sing a hymn. He answered, " I have no objection ! I am against nothing that is good : " so we sung those awful words,—

Thee we adore, eternal Name,
And humbly own to thee,
How feeble is our mortal frame,
What dying worms we be !

The people sang lustily and with a solemn spirit ; for the Divine presence was with us all the way through ; and in such a manner as I never knew before at any funeral. When the minister read these words, " Not to be sorry as men without hope," Mrs. Wilkinson (who hung upon my arm with her two little babes) was so overwhelmed with the presence of God, that she could not refrain from crying out, " Sorry ! no ! Glory be to God ! glory be to God ! Glory, and praise, and blessing, be ascribed unto God, for ever and ever ! " Her spirit seemed as if it was ready to launch into the eternal world, to be with Jesus and her happy husband. A remarkable power fell on all that could hear her ; so that the people were melted into tears ; some of sorrow, others of joy.

From this time the work of God began to revive at Grimsby, and the country people caught the fire, and carried it along with them into their little societies.

Robert Wilkinson was, as you have described him, " an Israelite indeed ; a man of faith and prayer : who, having been a pattern of all good works, died in the full triumph of faith." O what a blessing to live and die a Christian ! May I also be a follower of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises ! In my life, and at my death, may I be like him !

MR. WILLIAM FERGUSON.

My father and mother lived at Kelso, in Scotland, where they had five children. But when my mother was big with the sixth, she could not be delivered, the child being dead within her. In a desperate case a desperate method was used; incision was made, and the child was taken out of her side. And yet, by the blessing of God she survived, and recovered her health and strength. But the physician assured her, if she had another child it could not be born, but she must infallibly die. However, she was with child again: as the time of delivery approached, expecting nothing but death, she cried to God day and night. But to the amazement of all, she was delivered with more ease than she had ever been of any child before.

I was the child then born, on the 25th of March, 1735. I was brought up a Presbyterian, and had very early impressions on my soul. When I was about six years old, I used to wonder I could not weep under sermons as others did. I left off play, and going into the fields, used to think of God, of the devil, of heaven, and hell. I thought God loved me, and was willing to bring me to heaven. But I thought if the devil should get me to hell, I shall never get out. Yet I thought Christ suffered for my sins; and thereby made a full atonement for them. But although I knew these great truths, yet my heart was unchanged; and I constantly went on in the follies of childhood, according to the devices of my own heart.

When I was ten years old, my parents removed to Eysmouth, eight miles north of Berwick: here I grew thoughtful again, and began to pray much, wherein I found so great pleasure that I persuaded four boys I was acquainted with, to go with me, morning and evening, into a secret place in a timber yard, between two stacks of deals, where we prayed one after the other. This we constantly did for two months: but a young gentleman

lodged just by, whose window looked into the yard : observing us to go thither constantly, he wanted to know the reason. And meeting me one day alone, after giving me many good words, he asked me why we met together between the stacks ? I told him, but begged him not to tell any one ; which he faithfully promised. But notwithstanding he went immediately and told the children themselves, and their parents, and the people of the town ; many of whom cried out, " That is blasphemy for such young children to pretend to pray." The children were soon laughed out of their religion, and never rested till they made me like themselves ; nay, till they taught me to get drunk, which we did in that very place where we used to pray together.

Two years after, my parents removed to Holy Island, nine miles south of Berwick. The people of this place were mostly smugglers, and the children remarkably wicked. Of these I soon learned to curse and swear, and glory in my shame. I learned to tell lies for sport, to play at cards, to dance, to work the greatest part of the Sabbath day, and to make a mock at all religious people, saying they were all hypocrites. And in this deplorable condition I remained till I was near twenty years old. During this time I was twice in great danger of being drowned going to Holy Island in very dark nights. It was also a flowing tide : I had lost my way : and the sea came in fast upon me. But both times I was brought safe to land. I was serious for awhile after. But I then got into laughing, trifling company ; and my seriousness soon wore off. Another time, being with a gang of smugglers, a king's officer clapped a pistol to my breast, and swore bitterly, if I lifted a hand he would shoot me through the heart. The thought of instant death shocked me much. But this too I stifled by drinking and dancing. So I continued fast asleep in the devil's arms, till one day as I was working in the shop with my father, my mind ran upon a match of drinking and dancing, in which I was engaged to join in the evening. Suddenly I heard a voice as from heaven, saying, " What if thou shouldst drop down dead in the midst of the dance ! wouldst thou go to heaven ?" I said, " No, I am not fit for heaven." Immediately I felt I had passed sentence upon myself ;

and that if I went not to heaven, hell was my portion : light broke in : I was filled with horror : I saw myself hanging over the mouth of hell by the brittle thread of life.

My father looked me in the face, and asked, "What is the matter?" But I made no answer. He said, Certainly something is the matter. For you are sometimes red as scarlet, and in a moment white as chalk. But still I spoke not one word : my mouth was stopped : I was guilty before God. Yet I was thankful that I was alive, and thought, "O that God would let me live one day longer ! In how different a manner would I spend my time ! Surely not in the ways of sin." Soon after I sat down to dinner ; but I could not swallow a morsel. My mother observing this, was very angry with my father, thinking I was grieved at something he had said. But finding that was not the case, she was quite struck, and turning to me, said, "My dear, why do you not eat your dinner?" I made no answer. Indeed I could not, for my heart was fit to break.

In the evening my company came in to carry me to the dancing. To their great surprise, they found me reading the Bible. They asked my father and mother, "Are not you willing he should go with us?" They said, "Yes ; but we think he is not well." They said, "Come, we shall soon cure him. Lay hold. We will carry him." "Do," says another, "and I will carry his fiddle." I looked at them and said very mildly, "If you do carry me I shall be of no use to you. For one dance I will not dance this night : and a tune I will not play." They started, and left me.

When our family went to rest, I durst not go to bed, for fear I should awake in hell. I tried to pray, but could not. I stayed for some time, with my heart as hard as a stone. At last I fell upon my knees, and with a flood of tears cried out, "Lord, be merciful to me ; for I am a great sinner." I found my mind a little eased, and went to bed and slept comfortably. But in the morning my trouble was as great as ever. When I went out about my business, many mocked me for my gravity : others said, "It is a great pity so fine a young man should lose the use of his reason." But what grieved me more, was to

see all the people, as I had been myself, fast asleep in the devil's arms.

On Sunday morning I rose early, and the tide being out, walked to Lonwick on the main land, and went to a Presbyterian meeting. The minister's text was, "I will arise and go to my father." It was a word spoken in season. I thought he looked at me all the time. People did indeed look at me; many of them knowing me well, and therefore wondering how I came there. When I came home my mother begged me with tears to reveal what was upon my mind. She said, "What is it you have done? Have you murdered any body?" I said, "No, mother; I have murdered nobody; but I have almost murdered my poor soul."

As soon as the inhabitants of the island found I would not drink, swear, or work on the Lord's day, they were violently angry, so that I could hardly walk the street for the mob setting upon me. And my father and mother insisted on my working at my business on the Lord's day. But I told them, "No: never more, I will sooner have the flesh torn off my bones." My prayer now was, to get out of this ungodly place: and a fortnight after, my parents consented: so I left them, not knowing whither I was going, but designing to follow my father's trade, provided I could find any master who would not require me to work on the Lord's day.

When I came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, as I was going down Pilgrim-street, I saw abundance of people going along, who seemed remarkably serious. I asked a man, "Pray who are all these?" He answered, "These are all Wesleyites; they are coming from the preaching."—This was the first time I saw or heard of them. The next day I went on to Sunderland, where I found out my father's brother, and inquired if he knew any barber who did not work on a Sunday. "Yes," said he, "there is Tommy Parker." So to him I went without delay.

To my great surprise, the sailors that came into our shop did not curse or swear at all. But several of them took my master by the hand, and said, "How do you do, brother?" I asked, "Pray sir, are all these your brothers?" He said, "We are all brethren in Christ."—When Sunday came I got one to show me to the preach-

ing house, where I saw my master in the pulpit! His text was, "He shall bring forth the top stone with shouting, crying, Grace, grace unto it." I then told him the distress of my mind. He advised me to go to London, telling me I should there have all the means of grace in the greatest abundance. I went to London, where my cousin Thomas Freyer soon got me into a shop: and not long after, on my telling him I wanted to meet in a class, carried me to the Tabernacle. I went into the vestry, and told two gentlemen I found there, "I should be glad to meet in a class that I might speak my experience, and tell of the work of God which I have found upon my heart." One of them said, "What class shall we put him into?" The other answered, "Indeed I cannot tell. Mr. Wesley's classes are far more strictly looked after than ours." If you please then, said I, I will go and meet in one of his classes. He looked at me and said, "Really, young man, I cannot blame you." I went immediately to Mr. Wesley, who, after a little conversation, gave me a note of admittance.

As I now prayed much, and heard many sermons, and abstained from all known sin, I began to be very easy, supposing myself to be a very good Christian. And one day, in a house in Ratcliffe highway, I began talking as if I had gone a great way in religion. This an old gentlewoman observing, came, and taking me by the hand, said, "Do you know your sins are pardoned?" I answered, "I hope so." She said, "I fear not: for if they were you would have the witness in yourself. Satan cares not how far we go in religion, if we will but stop short of this. I advise you, when you go home, pray earnestly to the Lord to show you whether your sins are pardoned.— If they are, to give you the witness of it: if they are not, never to let you rest without it." I was quite speechless, finding I had stopped short of the prize. I hastened home, praying all the way. I watched, I prayed, I waited in all the means of grace, longing for Christ to come into my heart. I could hardly eat any food till Sunday came, when I went to the Seven-dials, to hear Mr. Wesley. I was much blessed under the word, expecting every moment to receive the witness. On Monday, as I sat at work, I was thinking the sermon over again, when on a

sudden my mind was whirled away, and filled with vain imaginations. After a time I cried out, "Lord, what a wicked wretch am I! Wilt thou pardon this, with all my other sins?" In a moment the Lord said to my heart, "My blood hath atoned not only for this, but for all the sins which thou hast ever committed. Thou art no more thy own. Thou art bought with a price; and I will give thee power to glorify me with thy body and thy spirit, which are mine." In that moment my hell was turned into heaven—joyful day that ascertained the kingdom mine just two years after the Lord had awakened me out of the sleep of death. I seemed now to be in another world: every thing was new. Every thing about me was comfortable; for the Lord smiled upon my soul. For two days and two nights every breath I drew was praise and prayer, having sweet intercourse opened between God and my soul. When Satan tempted, I said, "Go to my Lord!" And the temptation died away. Whatever I wanted, I could make my request known to my reconciled Father for it, in the name of his well beloved Son, and he granted my petition. I asked of him two temporal blessings; the one, that he would give me a lawful calling, wherein I might not be so continually teased to work on the Sabbath day: the other, that he would give me a help mate. He answered me in both. He inclined the heart of a watchmaker to teach me his trade, who afterward gave me his granddaughter to wife. And from that time we have sweetly gone on, hand in hand, toward our Father's kingdom.

Some time after, having a great desire to see my parents once more, I went with my wife to Holy Island.—But now I was exposed to a danger I had not foreseen. I was employed in my trade by some of the first people in the country, and frequently invited to their houses; whereby pride and other unholy tempers began to revive in my soul. However, by the grace of God, I continued fighting against them, though sometimes conquering, sometimes yielding. Indeed I seemed like a door upon the hinges, turning backward and forward. This filled me with unspeakable grief; and though I still knew God was reconciled, yet I went mourning all the day long, because of inbred sin.

But about fourteen years ago, as I was one night sitting in my house at Alnwick, in Northumberland, my family being all in bed, I began to read one of Mr. Walsh's sermons. When I came to those words, "Salvation is twofold; emptying us of evil, and filling us with good!" my heart was melted down, and I cried out, "Lord, give me at least the former part of thy salvation. Empty me of evil!" In a moment I felt such a change as no tongue can express. I felt every kind and degree of anger and resentment quite taken out of my heart. My pride also was gone; and I was thoroughly content to be despised of all men. I was crucified to the world; to all its honours and profits; all its comforts and pleasures. The fear of man was quite gone; and so was all conformity to the world. I regarded neither the smiles nor the frowns of great men; being quite set at liberty, and finding nothing in my heart but pure love—love free from dissimulation, abhorring that which is evil, and cleaving to that which is good. I cried out, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits he hath done unto me!" The Lord said, "Go work in my vineyard. As thou hast been a faithful advocate for the devil, be now a faithful labourer for me." I shivered at the thought, knowing the littleness of my talents, and fearing I should dishonour his cause: yet, believing it was his will, I promised to go, though with my life in my hand.

When I declared what a blessing I had received, there was nobody that would believe me. And when I said, I believed God had called me to preach, many were ready to swallow me up. I desired they would give me a fair trial. But it could not be. So I went to a little country town, where no Methodist had ever preached. I spoke to a serious, attentive congregation; in consequence of which I was invited to four country towns near Alnwick. But the more I laboured, the more offended some of my brethren were, till the providence of God called me to London.

I came to London on Friday, nine years ago. The next day the men were hung in chains on Bow-Common. On Sunday thousands of people came to gaze at them: to whom I preached on, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Quickly after I was seized with a violent fever. But the consola-

tions of God were not small with me ; and made me large amends for all the pains I suffered. After the Lord had raised me up from my sick bed, it pleased him to try me with poverty. We were brought so low as to have neither food to eat, nor raiment to put on. This was our case while I served a severe master, for very small wages ; who, nevertheless, was continually blaming me, and threatening to turn me off.

At length the Lord put it into the heart of my dear wife to advise me to try what I could do in Holland. I left England in the latter end of August. After a passage of ten days, I landed at Amsterdam ; from whence I went to the Hague. It was at first very distressing to me that I did not understand the language. But the Lord moved the minds of the people, wherever I was, to help me all they could. He raised me up real friends, who sent me from town to town, and recommended me from one to another : even to the first persons of the land. And after having disposed of my goods, I was brought home again in safety, after an absence of six months and three days.

I now thought my work abroad was done, and that I might spend the rest of my life in my own country. But, to my surprise, I received abundance of letters, earnestly pressing me to come back. Believing it was the call of God, on the 11th of April, 1778, I embarked at Helvoetsluys, and crossed over to the Hague, where my friends, with the utmost kindness, introduced me to the chief of the country, the prince of Orange in particular. He asked me many questions concerning both my country and religion. I answered him with all simplicity, and he appeared well satisfied. Soon after I was made burgher of the town. From thence I went to Leyden, Delf, Rotterdam, Dort, Hærlém, Amsterdam, Utrecht, and most of the other cities in the United Provinces. In my journeys I met with many persons whom I believed to be the true children of God. But it was a grievous cross that we could speak only a very few words to each other. Having done my business, I returned by Helvoetsluys to Harwich, and so to London.

On April 15, 1779, I embarked again for Holland, and went through the same places I did last year. And now

I could converse a little in the Dutch language. The first children of God that I found were in the city of Hærlém. They came to my shop, and told me the goods were pretty : but I must take care not to set my heart upon them. I told them my heart was in heaven, and that these pretty things were under my feet. One of them then invited me to his house, where I found a company assembled together. They received me with the utmost courtesy, and asked what religion I was of. I answered, "Of that described in the 13th of 1st Corinthians, from the fourth to the seventh verse." Having read the words, they said, "This is our religion too : we receive you as a brother." They recommended me as such to all their acquaintance, so that I was kindly received wherever I came. And I found just the same liberty of spirit with these as with my brethren in England. From this time I found, all over the country, persons that knew and loved the Gospel : and after spending six months comfortably among them, I cheerfully returned to my family.

I went again the next spring, and was received with the same kindness as before. And having more of the language, I found out more and more of the children of God. I rejoiced to find among these some of the rich and great, who appeared to be as humble as the least of them.— They were glad to hear that there was a people in England that loved and served God. And some of them had a great desire to settle a correspondence with their English brethren : which was soon after effected, and has continued ever since, to the no small comfort of both.

When I entered upon this trade I had many discouragements. Most of my acquaintance either mocked or pitied me, saying I was the most improper person in the world to be concerned in such a business. And, besides, I had no money. I had, indeed, very little. But I believed God would bless that little. And he sent me help in time of need, so that money came just when it was wanted. One time I was shipping off a chest of goods, but had not money to pay the duty. I told my wife, "God will provide." Presently a gentleman I never saw before knocked at the door, and when he came in, he told me he wanted a parcel of goods, and would pay part of the mo-

ney then. He did so ; and it was as much as I wanted to pay the duty on my chest.

It is now about fourteen years since I began, according to my ability, to call sinners to repentance. And I bless God, though I have had many discouragements, I am not yet weary. I have not laboured in vain. God has given me to see a little fruit of my labours. Blessed be his name, he has washed me from my sins ; and I know he is able to keep me from falling, and to enable me to grow in grace, till he receives me into his glory.

W. F.

MR. JOHN VALTON.

TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I have long resisted your importunate desire that I would give you a short account of my experience ; being desirous to conceal my insignificant life till I was no longer interested in the honour or dishonour that cometh of man. But your last letter on the subject, and the Rev. Mr. Fletcher's opinion on the same, have satisfied me that I "owe it to God and his Church." I shall therefore humbly submit an extract thereof to the perusal of candid people, while I implore the benediction of my God.

I was born in the year 1740. My parents were natives of Franche Comte, near Switzerland, and members of the Church of Rome. They came to England a year or two before I was born ; so that I was providentially born and brought up in England. I was (with a brother and sister) made a member of that Church, and remained so during the early part of my life. I can well remember that serious impressions were very early made upon my mind ; but I had no one to guide me. When I was about nine years of age, I was sent to France for education. I was there boarded at a priest's, who was a schoolmaster. At this school I remained many months, imbibing the baneful

notions of idolatry and superstition. But as the priest half starved me, I never let my mother rest till she removed me back to London. Soon after I returned I was sent to a Latin school in Yorkshire, and was boarded at a clergyman's, who was master of the school. Having had but little knowledge of Popery, I readily attended the Church of England, during the seven years that I was there. But as nothing was ever said to me about religion, I remained in utter darkness, and I lived without God in the world. While I was here I once met with Mr. Hervey's Meditations. I was very powerfully affected, and resolved to amend my life. For several days I was careful not to offend my God; but the impression was soon effaced.

At seventeen years of age I returned to London, and after spending a year or two at an academy, was soon after, through the interest of a nobleman, got into a public office under the government. I was appointed a clerk at Portsmouth, where God was pleased to restrain me in a wonderful manner, amid innumerable temptations.—After I had been in office near three years, I was appointed to attend the army in Portugal, last war, as a clerk of the stores, &c. I found in myself a fear, when I went to sea, lest the ship should be lost, and my poor soul perish. I had the same fear of being killed in an engagement, when I landed, and of my soul becoming a prey to the worm that never dies. While I was at Lisbon I frequently visited their churches, saw their idolatry and superstition, and rejoiced that I had escaped the mother of harlots.

Soon after I returned to England I met with a sore trial, which made we think of and seek after God. But being among my gay companions, this, and some temptations that were now thrown in my way, quite overturned my resolution, and I became as vain and sinful as ever. However, I purposed that if God should please to remove me where I was unknown, I would then give myself up to him. The desire of the unrighteous was granted; for the merciful God was pleased to make way for my removal in two or three months. I was then sent to the king's magazines at P——t, where I was an entire stranger. In this place there was a gentlewoman whose husband was in the

king's service. She had been a member of the Methodist society for some years, and was the only one in that neighbourhood. She invited me to her house one day, and spoke something on serious subjects. I threw in my mite, which made an impression on her mind in my favour. She now frequently invited me to her house, and led me out of the paths of error and misery to the fountain of life and love. She put several books into my hands which were made very useful to me. In a few weeks painful convictions began to fasten upon my mind, and I sincerely strove to forsake all sin, and make a sacrifice of my accustomed amusements. Fear prompted me to pray—sometimes with, and sometimes without a book. Her conversation roused me : and I began in good earnest to seek after God. But, being in danger of resting on my form of godliness, she, with some difficulty, beat me out of all my retreats, and convinced me that nothing would avail without faith, and that salvation was the free, unmerited gift of God through the redemption that is in Jesus. The books that I read bore the same testimony, which at length threw me into self-despair. Prayer became a burden, and I knew not what to do. At length I resolved to write to you, sir, and in an anonymous letter unbosomed my heart, and sought your advice. Your letter I beg leave here to transcribe for the benefit of such as may be in the like state with me :—

“London, January 31, 1764.

“DEAR BROTHER,—It is certainly right, with all possible care, to abstain from the outward occasions of evil : but this profits only a little : the inward change is the one thing needful for you. You must be born again, or you will never gain a uniform and lasting liberty. Your whole soul is diseased, or rather dead, dead to God, dead in sin. Awake then and arise from the dead ; and Christ shall give thee light. To seek for a particular deliverance from one sin only, is mere lost labour. If it could be attained it would be little worth ; for another would arise in its place : but indeed it cannot before there is a general deliverance from the guilt and power of all sin. This is the thing which you want, and which you should be continually seeking for. You want to be justified freely from all things, through the redemption which is in Jesus. It

might be of use if you were to read over the first volume of Sermons, seriously and with prayer. Indeed nothing will avail without prayer. Pray, whether you can or not ; when you are cheerful, when you are heavy, pray : with many or few words, or none at all ; you will surely find an answer of peace. And why not now ?

“ I am, &c.,

J. W.”

This letter proved a blessing unto me indeed. I now gave up myself to God, and resolved to seek the general deliverance that I wanted. A few weeks after this I was much encouraged by a child seven years old, who came to drink tea with me. I called her once, “ My little angel.” The girl replied, “ O I dreamed last night that you were made an angel, and me too, and that you flew up to the skies, and that I followed you, calling upon you to stop, but you would not, but flew up till you got to heaven.”

About this time my skepticism appeared. I was tempted to question the being of a God ; whether he could hear my prayers, especially as there might be many praying at the same time. I doubted of the Divinity of the Scriptures, and the purity of the Lord Jesus Christ, being born of a woman. My prayers were now very dry and formal. I quarrelled with all the books I read, as they appeared dark and mysterious ; the Scriptures doubtful and unintelligible ; thought God had nothing to do with me, nor ever regarded my prayers. However I continued to pray several times a day. Satan now set upon me with great power. He represented the many stages I had to go through before I got to heaven : 1. Deeper conviction ; 2. Justification ; and then through many tedious steps to sanctification : after that, through many more to glory.—He suggested to me that I had better postpone the work till, by marriage, I had acquired a fortune, and then I might retire, and wholly give myself up to God.

I had also grievous assaults from fear and shame, and felt at times my heart as hard as adamant. Yet I had now and then wonderful tokens of the Divine goodness, and have risen up in the middle of the night to pray and praise the Lord. One day I uttered my soul in these words : “ This afternoon I found the river of joy swelling

in my breast, through the influence of the sweet heavenly shower : and the Sun of righteousness arose upon me, and gave a warmth to my heart, and called forth the enlivened seeds of gratitude."

About this time I had a remarkable dream. I thought that I was in a very large house, which was then building at the place where I lived. I thought I went up stairs into the garret, where I saw the devil in bed. I went up to his bed's feet, got hold of his clothes, and stripped him naked. This enraged him so that I thought he got up and pursued me. In my flight I met my Redeemer, who told me, "If he touches thee, he will have thee." I replied, Lord, how is it possible that I should escape touching him? I thought he made signs to me to get behind him, and lay hold of the hem of his garment, by which I escaped the grand adversary. I knew not the purport of my dream till I was about to strip the devil of his subjects.

I generally found that the drawings of the Father were followed by painful discoveries of my evil nature. My heart now appeared to me like the Ethiopian's skin, and I had no ease in my bones by reason of my sin. I said, in my haste, all comforters are liars, and I was sorely tempted to give all up. In the agony of my soul I one day swore that I would give up religion. I was so stung with remorse for what I had done, that I raved like a madman, bit myself, and became fit only to dwell among the tombs. Who, but those who have felt the like, can conceive the horrors of my soul? I fell on my face, but durst not lie there, expecting to be hurried into everlasting burnings. The sun and the light were a pain to me. The condemned hole in Newgate would have best suited the gloomy horrors of my soul. I charged my God most foolishly, and uttered expressions only befitting the mouth of a devil. After this I went upon a visit to London; and being at Mr. Windsor's, Mr. Mark Davis came there to drink tea. I accompanied him to Wapping, where he preached, and found the word made a blessing to my soul. This was the first time of my hearing a Methodist preacher.

After this the trials and temptations that I endured were so various, that I cannot, sir, consistent with your plan, recount them, and therefore must pass to the eve of my

deliverance. The enemy of souls had for some weeks stirred up the husband of my mother in the Gospel, who was determined that I should not be permitted to see her. To this effect, he both secretly and openly defamed me, and made me out such a monster that I became universally despised by the gentlemen in the office, and the country around about. On the third of May things were come to the height. I had the severest trial that I ever felt. But an invisible hand supported me, and enabled me to bear the indignation of man. I went into my room, with a variety of suggestions to put an end to my life; but by the grace of God I was preserved. I prayed with great violence, till nature was exhausted; I then stripped off my coat, and wrestled upon the floor in great agony. In this posture I continued all the night, groaning to be delivered, and in the greatest torment. In the morning nature failed, and I was so ill that I was obliged to go to bed. But alas! I could not rest! I got upon my knees again, and began crying to God for mercy. I had such a sense of the wrath of God due to my sins, that I expected the pit to open its mouth and swallow me up quick.—While I was praying, suddenly I was wrapped up in the visions of the Almighty. I saw the holy God with vengeance in his countenance, and thunder in his hand. He seemed determined to deal the vindictive blow. At the same time I saw the great Priest of God standing in his seamless garment, interceding for me. For a time the Almighty seemed inexorable. At last he looked with a placid smile upon his Son, and then upon the malefactor, and it seemed as though he had said,—

My Son is in my servant's prayer,
And Jesus forces me to spare.

My burthen was gone, and my soul became calm and serene, and I had laid me down in peace and took my rest. This sight I had for several days, and yet I knew not clearly the purport of it for some months, not having an interpreter with me, one among a thousand.

After I had a little breathing time my soul was tried to the very uttermost. A dangerous plot was laid for me by the implacable husband of my friend; but God wonderfully delivered me. The sins also that I had been guilty of before my conversion were brought to my view. A light from

hell gleamed upon me! Despair seized me, and I had not a shadow of hope. My body was so chastised at the same time that I had well nigh lost my senses. O how my soul mourned and prayed! Notwithstanding all this weight of affliction, I began now to warn and woo the sinners that came in my way, to flee from the wrath to come. I felt a very earnest desire for the salvation of all mankind, and could not help throwing in my mite for this purpose.

About this time my relatives began to be very uneasy about me. They thought that all the hope of my gain would be gone, and I should lose the favour of my noble patron, which would entirely prevent my promotion. In answer to this, the reply of my soul was, "Come, Lord Jesus, and then adieu to friends, the world, and all its delusions." The loss of these was nothing to me, while a sight of my evil nature absorbed my spirits, and reduced me to the very depths of misery. O how bitterly did I lament the force of my passions from day to day! In what agonies did I bewail my nativity, and how often have I cursed the hour that gave me to the light! I have over and over gnashed my teeth, and could have torn myself to pieces. The fear of instant damnation prevented me from giving utterance to the horrible blasphemies that passed through my mind. Pride haunted me like a shadow. I have been frequently upon the point of cursing my God and all around me.

O what a loathsome hypocrite
Am I? A child of wrath and sin;
An heir of hell, a son of night,
An outward saint, a fiend within:
A painted tomb! a whited wall!
A worm! a sinner stripp'd of all!

It was about this time that predestination presented its Medusa's head to my mind, and the old murderer at times persuaded me that God had ordained me, in free wrath, to the worm that never dies, and to the fire that is never quenched. This suggestion has often thrilled through my soul with horror. When I have been in the extremity of suffering from self and Satan, I have had this thought strongly suggested, "that I was so tried more than many others, because God intended me to preach the Gos-

pel, that by the experience of temptations I might know how to succour others." In spite of all my sufferings I continued in much prayer. Indeed most of my time was spent in this exercise, as I had very little business in the office. Sometimes I have had great power in prayer, and my soul has been raised into an ecstasy; but like Samuel, I knew not the voice of the Lord. One night I dreamed twice that God had pardoned my sins. In the first dream I thought I told a friend that the Lord had forgiven me my sins, and that the witness of the Spirit came into my soul like the "rushing of mighty waters." I then awoke, and prayed to God that if he had forgiven me, he would then give me the assurance of it. I dreamed the same again, but thought then that the witness "came as a rushing, mighty wind." Notwithstanding this, I kept praying,—

Send forth the witness of thy Son,
 O God, into my panting heart;
 That, govern'd by thy blood alone,
 From thee I never may depart;
 But, following my celestial guide,
 Be number'd with the glorified.

One day, being in an agony of grief and temptation, I fell on my knees, but could not pray. I then came to a resolution to give up all. I said, in a deluge of tears, "Lord, I do not wonder at my wicked thoughts and desires, for how should it be otherwise? Can clean water flow from a foul spring, or good fruit grow upon a bad tree? Lord, let me now fall into thy hands; do with me as seemeth thee good. I have given up all, and must quit the field. I see I can do nothing till thou hast changed my nature." Scarce had I pronounced these words, but I found something inwardly concurring with my resolution, and saying, "Why that is the thing thou shouldst do." I was suddenly comforted. I now saw that God permitted me thus to suffer in order to divorce me from the law, and to bring me to Christ. I walked in sweet freedom, and was happy, having, as it were, shook off my chains. I leaned upon Jesus, and was truly supported. He was my wisdom and righteousness, and I could praise my God with joyful lips. But O! how short-lived was my liberty! The next day I was reduced to

the utmost misery. Hell rose up against me. I felt hatred to God, and longed to curse him. I gnashed my teeth, stamped around the room like a demoniac, and wanted only fire to complete my hell. This scene was introduced by the tempter. He suggested to my timorous heart, "Aye, thou art now become quite light and trifling, instead of mourning for thy sins." I believed him, and fell into bondage. Under my sufferings I still endeavoured to win souls to God. I met and prayed with four or five persons once a week, and read to them, and occasionally spoke to those that came in my way.

About the beginning of September I was taken by a friend to Miss March's. A few select friends were met together, to whom I freely unbosomed myself. They greatly comforted me when they told me that it was clear to them that God had forgiven me all my sins. I think when they went to prayer God gave me the witness of his Spirit, and I could truly praise him. About this time I was seized with a long and dangerous intermitting fever, but my temptations were then suspended. I had a longing desire to depart that I might be with Christ, for I had no doubt but that I should see and enjoy my God for ever. But in the midst of my consolations I had many hours of long interruption by temptations. Once, for near eight hours together, I had such horrible views of the mansions of eternal misery that the sweat ran down me like tears. But I was heard in that which I feared, and the Lord, one day, in the midst of my sufferings, applied these words, "I will do thee good in thy latter days." I believed, although I knew not the import of the words. I concluded this first year with some days of sunshine; a sweet promise was applied to me, and I was enabled to receive it. I felt my bosom glow with love, and was overwhelmed with a sense of his abundant goodness. Here ends a small part of my experience in the year 1764.

In the beginning of the second year of my pilgrimage the language of my soul was, "I find my evil nature thrust sore at me. O God, if thou art not on my side, I shall be ruined. O Lord, arise and fight for me: for Christ's sake deliver me. What avails it, Lord, that thou hast pardoned me, if thou dost not also give me the mind that was in Christ Jesus? O come, Lord, and fix thy throne

in my heart, and rule within me without control. Bring me to the perfect day, when I shall love thee with all my heart and soul, and all I do be a holy and acceptable sacrifice to thee, through Jesus Christ my great high priest." It seemed to me at times that the Lord wanted to keep me in close communion with himself, and to sequester me from every thing worldly : and indeed the language of my soul was,—

Thy only love do I require,
Nothing on earth beneath desire,
Nothing in heaven above :
Let earth and heaven and all things go,
Give me thy only love to know,
Give me thy only love.

In March I received the abiding witness of the Spirit, and was truly happy. In a deluge of delight I gratefully acknowledged the goodness of my God. But this only prepared me for deeper discoveries of my evil nature, and sore conflicts. A while ago the battles of the warrior were as a confused noise ; but these as with garments rolled in blood. My consolations were of short duration ; and, as it were, given me like cordials to men under the surgeon's knife, to prevent my fainting. I have had such horrid blasphemies injected, that I have been forced to put my handkerchief in my mouth to prevent my bringing forth monstrous births. At times I have raved, bit, and tore myself like a madman, and have cried out, Lord, I cannot drink this bitter cup ; O remove it from me. I have been near to curse my God, religion, and my natal day. Sometimes I have, in the most moving, piercing, lamentable cries, called the Redeemer to my help. My arms and heart were open to embrace and welcome the Desire of nations, and in the extremity of grief I have rolled and twined like a worm upon the floor.

During this year I generally arose between four and five in the morning. My hours of prayer were five, seven, nine, and one, six, nine ; beside short prayers between, and the rest of the day was mostly spent in reading and singing. Twice a week I observed a solemn fast, as also some particular days. Sometimes I extended my fasts to near six in the evening, by which I nearly ruined my constitution.

I frequently suffered much in my mind, through cold-

ness, dryness, and heaviness in my devotion, although the very language of my heart was,—

Father, I long my soul to raise,
And dwell for ever on thy praise;
Thy praise with glorious joy to tell,
In ecstasies unspeakable:
While the full power of faith I know,
And reign triumphant here below.

Now and then I had very precious seasons in prayer; it was after one of these that I said, "This morning I had a very close conference with my God. The Lord gave me whatever I asked. O what sweet communion I had with my God! With what rapture did I anticipate death! And who would not with such a hope full of immortality?" At another time, "At nine o'clock prayer, Jesus did sweetly reveal himself unto me. His garments smelled of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, and I could truly rejoice in him."—Meantime I had many fears of falling away, and dreaded being exposed to company, lest I should, through shame, omit reproving them. These fears followed me more or less through the year, and made me pour out strong cries and tears unto God. However, in the general, I took up my cross, and endeavoured not to suffer sin upon my brother, and with some good effect. I also read a sermon once a week to about nine persons, and met them as a class, when Mrs. E—— could not come; and sometimes I had sweet refreshments in this work, though it was often a great trial to me.

Toward the latter end of this year, William Darney, a preacher, drank tea with me one afternoon in London.—He well nigh ruined my soul. I unbosomed my heart to him, and told him the earnest wrestlings of my soul for sanctification. To my great surprise and discouragement, he told me that there was no such a thing as being saved from sin, on this side a deathbed. I was thunderstruck! I replied, "Sir, I had rather have given a thousand pounds, than you should have told me this. What! am I to wait till death comes to sanctify the elect people of God, and free the soul from the work of the devil?"

Hei mihi! quanto de spe decidi!

My soul was thrown into the greatest distress. I thought I never could continue the war against fleshly lusts all my life, especially the sin that did so powerfully

beset me. But he gave me this short recipe, Marry ; and I think the next brought me three or four damsels, I suppose to choose a wife from among them ! I was all this evening in a deplorable state ! My heart was broke, and I was resolved to give all up. I went to bed with a broken heart.

In the morning I awoke, perfectly assured of my Redeemer's love, and I cried out, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Yet when I rose, a little before four, I was variously assaulted. I bitterly lamented my coming to London. I had nothing of this when in my obscure corner ; I communed alone with my God. O Lord, thou hast hitherto taught and wrought alone with me. Preserve and love me to the end.

A day or two after this watchman smote me, and took away my veil, you, sir, came to London for the winter months. I went that evening to the Foundry, and heard you adapt a discourse to my situation from these words, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it," Psalm lxxxi, 10. This discourse was like oil to my wheels, and rescued my soul from the destroyers. I was now set on my legs again, and the Lord caused the bones that were broken to rejoice. A few days after it was shown me that the Lord was sitting upon me as a refiner's fire. My soul was often in an agony of prayer, and drowned in tears with horrible cries and exclamations : I was, as it were, the sport of devils. However, I had hung out the bloody flag, and was determined, by the grace and power of Jesus, either to conquer or die.

I have now given a very small extract from the account of my trials and temptations during the year 1765. I trust it will be useful to some precious souls, and illustrate the astonishing mercy, love, patience, power, and faithfulness of my God, whom I do now adore, praise, and love, and on my bended knees make an offering of it to his favour and patronage. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name.

Jan. 1, 1766. This day I wrote down my state as follows :—"I find an abiding sense of God's love to me for Christ's sake, and believe every moment that all my sins are blotted out. I still feel pride, a desire of creature love and esteem, and much wandering of heart ; all which

I earnestly desire to be saved from. My constant prayer and earnest expectation is to be perfected in love. I believe that the Lord will make me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. I believe that I shall soon love the Lord with all my soul. I expect the blessing every time I bow my knee to God. In fine, it is my desire to consecrate myself wholly to God. I regard not riches, honours, preferments, or any thing else that the world esteems. Jesus Christ is the sum total of all my desires. I feel it cleaves to all my thoughts, words, and works, and it is my misery that I do not love thee with all my heart. I pray and cry till my strength fails me. Never sure did a poor soul long more to love thee, and please thee, O my God: and yet such is my nature that I fail in every thing. O God, do thou cleanse me from all my idols. Let there be no strange god in me. Save me from pride and a filthy, unbelieving heart. Lord, hast thou brought me through two years' almost continued agony of soul, to cast me off at last?" O how bitterly did I lament the complicated sin of my heart, and deprecate the demerits of my whole life. My whole employment, from morning to night, was agonizing prayer, steeped in tears, till exhausted nature could bear no more, and my body could not obey the volitions of my soul. I frequently joined fasting or abstinence to my prayers and cries, and offered violence to the throne of mercy.

One day, while I was at prayer, the Lord applied these words with power, "The Egyptians thou hast seen this day, thou shalt see them no more for ever." Some time after this, while I was upon my knees, in one of the invisible flights of my soul, a messenger of love seemed to assure me that neither life nor death, &c., should be able to separate me from the love of God. I talked with my Maker face to face, and was hereby strengthened for more grievous temptations. Indeed, before this I had the most dreadful encounters with the powers of darkness, which I wrote down in these words:—"At one and six o'clock prayer I suffered violently from the enemy! O what agony my soul was in. It was the hour and power of darkness. Lord, thou wast faithful and good, and didst not leave me to the lust of my implacable enemy." Above an hour was I engaged. Language is too faint to express or impart an idea of what I suffered.

About this time I fell into the hands of those croakers who say, "Believe God has done it, and it is done." My poor distempered soul drank in this poison, and directly, when I went upon my knees I told God I believed he had done the work, and thanked him for it. But soon after, finding it otherwise, I charged God with unfaithfulness, and this made way for some dreadful blasphemies and most grievous suffering. But Providence threw my respected friend, Mr. Robert Windsor, into my way, who, by the grace of God, delivered me from this snare of the fowler.

On the 20th January, the Lord handed me the bitter cup. My soul was in dreadful agonies. I cried out, Lord, now let me drink the last drop, the very dregs. I cried and strained till I was ready to burst.

Yea, Lord, with deepest shame I own
My weariness of all thy ways;
My haste to throw the burden down,
Nor bear the hidings of thy face;
Nor wait till thou create me new,
And give the crown to conquest due.

Lord, hast thou chosen for me various sufferings?
Through sufferings then let me go. Lead on, my Captain, Conqueror, and King:—

Me and my brethren in distress,
Patient within thy kingdom keep;
Sure all thy fulness to possess,
Our harvest in the end to reap;
Thy spotless nature to retrieve,
And glorious in thine image live.

About the latter end of April I entered a hotter furnace than ever. My dearest relations desired to shake me off: all my acquaintances were set against me, and my spiritual family in a poor, dry state. A violent fever seized my body, and sore temptation assailed my soul. One day I seemed near death, and saw nothing but a dark valley before me, through which I must pass. A horrible dread overwhelmed my soul, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me. In the midst of these sufferings I felt no shadow of murmuring: nothing but love, patience, and resignation. This is but a small part of my inward sufferings, but enough, perhaps; to encourage some who may be under spiritual martyrdom. Notwithstanding all my trials, I continued to meet a few friends weekly, and read sermons

to them, and met them as a class. I reprov'd sin wherever I came, distributed pamphlets, and warn'd sinners to flee from the wrath to come. I visited the sick soldiers in their barracks, and instructed them as well as I could. I was uneasy in my mind when I heard of any that were sick, if I did not visit them. I went among the lime-burners, (a graceless people, near to where I lived,) and spoke to them, and gave them pamphlets, and reprov'd the Sabbath-breakers that I used to meet with in my way to church; and, in a word, endeavour'd to lay out my whole talent for God's glory and the good of souls. The unfaithfulness of several whom I met constantly, as in a class, caus'd me to shed many a tear. However, several were brought through my weak instrumentality to a saving knowledge of the truth; and I have now the pleasure to find that the fruit of my tears and toils is not lost.

Under my sufferings my soul has often been comforted by gracious answers to prayer. Once, when I was in sore trouble, the Lord said to me, "I will show thee what great things thou must suffer for my name's sake." A little after, in an agony of prayer, it was whisper'd to me, "I have blessed thee, yea, and thou shalt be blessed." By these promises my soul was comforted and supported; and, indeed, without them, it must have fainted, as I had but very few small intervals between my sufferings. I had greatly impair'd my health with fasting, so that I was oblig'd to diminish this, and only use abstinence. I continued in daily martyrdom for a few months more, earnestly labouring to mortify the deeds of the body, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. My soul was on the stretch for a full deliverance from all the carnal mind; at times ready to believe that God had done the work, but had not sufficient proof to support my faith till the latter end of August. On the 20th I had a notion that the Lord was taking away all my sin. On the 29th (a day of happy memory) I wrote down the following account in my journal:—

Where shall my wondering soul begin?

How shall I all to heaven aspire?

A slave redeem'd from death and sin,

A brand pluck'd from eternal fire!

How shall I equal triumphs raise,

Or sing my great Deliverer's praise!

Glory be to God my Saviour, in whom I now truly believe and rejoice. This being my intercession day, at twelve o'clock I kneeled down before the Lord. No sooner was I upon my knees than I felt a strange alteration take place in my heart, as in a moment, and after a blissful pause, I cried out, for near five minutes, "Glory be to God! glory be to God!" Then I said, Lord, thou hast delivered me from all sin: thou hast not failed of all that thou hast promised. Glory be to thee, thou hast given me my desire over my enemies. I am sure thou hast destroyed sin; I am sure thou hast! After praising my God, for some time, I requested a text of Scripture by way of confirmation. I opened the Bible, and fixed my finger upon these words: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. v, 21. I fell down on my face, and praised the Lord. I was lost in wonder, love, and praise! I felt indeed the "silent heaven of love." Soon after, when I returned to prayer, I felt a much greater degree of love than before. I could not contain myself; while I was praising God I was so transported that I assayed several times to fly from my knees. I then began to bless God for Mr. Wesley, who preached to us the whole Gospel. And now what shall I say? O Lord! great and marvellous have been thy mercies toward me. They are without number, glory be to thy holy name! Thou, thou alone hast wrought all my works in me. O do thou establish the thing thou hast wrought in me; and grant that it may be found unto the praise and glory of thy name, at the appearing of thy blessed Son, my Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And now, my unbelieving brethren, what will you say to these things? Will you go, as other times, to seek for enchantments in order to overthrow this truth, or to explain away this glorious salvation? Will you not cease to pervert the right way of the Lord, and bring an evil report on the good land, the rest of grace? Will you still blaspheme the work of the Holy Ghost, till God, in his just displeasure, shall condemn your souls to a wilderness state here, and perhaps save you but as by the skin of your teeth! On the first of September the language of my soul was, "O my Jesus! my Christ! my Redeemer! my Sa-

viour ! Thou art lovely and precious ! I glory in thee ! I rejoice in thee ! How wonderful has been thy love to me ; surpassing all conception. O the many snares that are laid for me, and yet my blessed Jesus does preserve me, and will preserve me to the end. I am weakness, ignorance, and helplessness itself, but my Jesus is strength, and wisdom, and all things to me ! Two or three days after this Satan began to assault me. Impure things were so injected that I could not read. I sung and prayed, and the Lord answered me by Isaiah vi, 7, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged." But directly after I was attacked again, and God then directed me to these words, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established," Isa. vii, 29. I stood reproved, and was enabled, for a few days, to hold fast my faith, in spite of many temptations and foul injections. One night I was sadly harassed with dreaming of a lion pursuing me up and down. The next day the lion roared upon me indeed ! It was a day of sore temptation. After dinner I went with the family into the parlour to prayer ; but I could scarce speak. Before I had done I sunk upon the floor, quite overcome. I begged of them all to leave me, that I might wrestle it out alone. O how was I torn and tempted ! What torment did I endure, and yet I could praise God ! I was much harassed concerning visiting the sick that I had no knowledge of, nor knew how to get admittance to. I believe Satan drove me into extremes in order to weary me out. It is unknown what crosses I had to take up respecting this. In the meantime my language was, "O my God, forgive me all my unfruitfulness, and deliver me from all my fear and shame. My God, thou knowest that I not only delight in thee, but the great desire of my soul is to bring sinners to the fountain of love. I would give my life that I might to the utmost improve my small talent, and glorify my blessed Redeemer. O my Saviour, give me grace, that I may wholly and simply follow thee, bearing thy reproach, and let it ever be my meat and drink to do thy will." Under all my sufferings I was enabled, for the most part, to believe that I was saved from evil, and that God had given me a new heart.

On the 29th of September, being in London, I went to Spitalfields chapel. After the sermon was over, I went

to prayer before sacrament, when the Lord did in a most wonderful manner bless me. He poured his love so copiously into my soul that I hardly knew how to contain myself. There the glorious Lord was unto me as a place of broad rivers. I thought I must have cried out, The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. I never was so overpowered in my life. My breath and strength were well nigh exhausted in praising God. In the midst of my joys I had this scripture impressed on my mind, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." Instantly, or ever I was aware, my soul was like the chariot of Aminadab. I was transported to the third heavens, and had a most glorious display of that celestial place! O how did my soul exult and gasp to breathe that purer air! I longed and expected to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. O my God, I bless thee, for thou art mine, and I am thine for ever. Two or three days after this I had another ecstatic view of the realms of bliss, and found a strong assurance of my Redeemer's love.

On the 5th of October, I wrote as follows: "The Lord poured his love into my soul this morning. I went to church very happy. I do not know that I ever had the testimony of the Spirit more clear to the forgiveness of sin than I had this morning of my being cleansed from all sin. When I put the question to my soul, Yea, hath God destroyed sin? I felt the Spirit so strongly answer me, that I cannot better express the sensation than by comparing it to what Elizabeth felt when she heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb. In prayer, after dinner, I was overcome with what I felt. The love of God came so powerfully upon me, that I could scarcely bear under it. I thought I must have sunk down. A few days after I said, The Lord still blesses me with an increase of his love. I scarce ever go upon my knees but I have very blessed and glorious displays of his love. I feel no doubt, no unbelief, nor (blessed be my God) any thing but pure love. My sole desire is after the living God, and for more of his image. I feel the presence of the Almighty, and his banner over me is love. I long to hear that word, Arise, my love, and come away!

October 24. O how did the Lord reveal himself to me this day! He gave me the spirit of prayer and supplica-

tion. I recapitulated, with joy and thankfulness, the particular mercies received since my conversion, and felt an inundation of love. All yesterday I felt sweet serenity of soul, and this day has been as yesterday, and much more abundant.

October 26. This morning, from half past four till near eight, I spent delightfully in prayer and singing. I found my God most remarkably present. I sung and prayed with tears of love, till my strength was exhausted.

November 16. I was seized with an illness which terminated in a cholera morbus. I looked for death every hour; but O, with what transport was I filled? My joy was unspeakable and full of glory. I saw the blessed Jesus ready to receive me. I was sick of love! I cried out in these awful moments, The blood of Jesus Christ truly cleanses from all sin. I felt it, giving glory to God. All the day long Jesus was my joy and my song. The next day my raptures were increased. The name of Jesus, or a thought of him, did so agitate my body, that I thought the vessel must break to set the soul at large! I cried out, "The love of God will kill me! It is too much. I cannot contain myself!" The raptures of my soul were inexpressible, and my joy insupportable. My tongue was fully employed all day in declaring the loving kindness of the Lord.

November 18. I was apprehensive of death, and was truly happy. In the midst of prayer these words were applied to my heart: "Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at last." How truly these words were verified, the sequel will show. I told a friend who came in that I had some trial coming on, and began preparing for battle. About four that afternoon I thought (and only thought) I felt something contrary to love. In an instant I lost sight of God, and Christ, and all consolation.

Despair almost seized me. When my friends were gone out of the parlour, I fell back in my chair, and with my arms extended, body distorted, and eyes uplifted, I blessed my God, and kissed that hand that seemed to be consuming me for my unfaithfulness. I could only adore. I could not blame nor accuse my God. I am amazed that nature could endure so much.

To conclude this year's account. Although I endeavoured to be as useful as my small talent would permit, and live a life of prayer and self-denial, giving myself up to God, and to the profit of my fellow creatures, yet Satan was continually driving me on into things beyond my measure, and hissing into my ears that I was "an unprofitable servant." Not discerning the agency of Satan, this, together with an ague and fever my body was afflicted with, caused me sore distress, as will appear in the subsequent account.

January 1, 1767, I wrote as follows. I have no doubt but that the Lord did deliver me from all sin, but whether it is so now or not I cannot tell. I cannot say that I find any murmuring or impatience. I am content to suffer, so that I may be presented blameless at the coming of the Lord Jesus. I hate all praise, seeing that I am vile, ignorant, and helpless; yea, a dead dog! O my God! shine upon the work thou hast wrought, that I may know the things that are freely given me of God. Make me a pillar in thy temple that I may go out no more.

February 18. This day that text, "Gad, a troop shall overcome him," was explained to me more clearly and fully than ever. I have, for some months past, run the gauntlet, and have had a temptation to most of those sins that formerly dwelt in my heart. I was violently beset by the fear of man, shame of my Master's cross, and fears of not holding out. The horrible decree sounded in my ears, "Thy destiny is damnation." Sloth, envy, jealousy, pride, anger, and love of the creatures, I had temptations to all these; and yet under all I saw God always to be love, and I also loved him.

These make up but a small part of my sore temptations during this year. But beside these, it was given me to suffer by outward persecution also, as the sequel will show. On the 12th of March, I went to R—m (a place near four miles from where I lived) to hear a preacher that was invited down by a gentleman of the place, to preach at his house. Soon after the preacher began, the father-in-law of the gentleman came in, with two more persecutors. He was a great tall man, and armed with a large whip, and primed with drink. Having asked the preacher a few questions, he was proceeding to violence, but Mr. G—k

made his escape into an inner chamber. He then violently attacked me, and thrust me out of the room. I retired then into the kitchen, and was praying by the fireside, expecting that I had had my portion. Soon after he came in and flew upon me, and swore he would broil me, and immediately seized me by the breast, and thrust my back against the bars, abusing me most horribly. He then took me up and was going to lay me upon the fire, but was prevented by the other two, who were afraid that he might go too far in his rage. He then dragged me to the door, and threw me into the hands of a large mob, who cried out, "Tear him to pieces! tear him to pieces! this is the clerk." With that they all surrounded me, and began to pull several ways. The first pull tore my shirt nearly from top to bottom. Some pulled me by the hair, some by my cravat, and were about to throw me off the coal wharf (which was within a few yards) into the river. The tide was down, so that had they flung me in, I should in all probability have been smothered in the mud. Expecting to be torn or trod in pieces every moment, I cried out, "Will you murder me?" Immediately God sent the ringleader of the mob to tear me out of their hands. He then bade me begone home, and uttered abusive language. A person present that favoured me, undertook to escort me safe from the mob, but meeting the minister and his wife in the town, he left me, fearing to give offence. The minister abused me, only not so bad as the great persecutor. I answered him with a few mild words, and went on my way. I had near four miles to go in the dark, but the Lord brought me safely home: thanks be to his holy name for the great deliverance.

Some time after this, I had another instance of the guardian care of my gracious Lord. I was returning from London in a Gravesend vessel, where were some gentlemen and ladies, and others. One of the gentlemen swore like a trooper. I lovingly reproved him. This made him exceeding mad, and he called me many names. I spoke to them all in great love, plainness, and earnestness, sparing neither rank nor sex. One gentleman spoke very big words, but he could then go no farther. Some time after we were standing upon the deck, and looking toward the shore, which was some distance from the vessel, the river

being there about a mile over at high water. While I was standing there, the boom of the ship turned over to the side I was standing on, and no one giving me timely notice, I was knocked overboard, and plunged over head with my great coat and gloves on. They never offered to help, or throw out any thing for me to lay hold on, but did me the kindness to cry out to a man on shore to get his boat out and come to me. As I was nothing of a swimmer, it was a wonder that I was not drowned. My great coat providentially swam on the water, and kept me from sinking, till the waterman got to me and saved me. I believe a quarter of a minute more had landed me on Canaan's shore. The waterman then rowed after the vessel for my things, and the ship's company then gathered about me, expressing their amazement at my deliverance; and could not help owning the adorable hand of my gracious Redeemer.

I was rowed ashore and put into a warm bed, and was as well as ever very soon. O my God, thou hast brought me through *fire* and *water*, and yet my life is spared. O that I may glorify thee therewith. Indeed, I have experimentally known the truth of that scripture, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." I have made it my one endeavour to do good both to the souls and bodies of my fellow creatures; yet am I the scorn, derision, and reproach of all; and I believe many would think they did God service by murdering me.—Added to my other trials, I suffered much from a nervous fever, and sometimes from the ague. For a considerable time I could hardly speak or read, through a weakness in my head, and often in my limbs; insomuch that I could not be at ease in any posture. However, my God supported me, and I was enabled to say with the same breath that cried out, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me,—Righteous art thou, O God, in all thy dealings. I lay my soul in the dust, and dare not say, What dost thou? Thou dealest not with me as I deserve, but as I need. I bow my soul before thee, and pray that thou wouldst do with me what seemeth thee best."

On the 5th of May, being ill of a fever, my temptations subsided, and the following scripture being deeply im-

pressed on my heart was a great support to it: "I will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me." The Lord was unto me as a place of broad rivers. His peace overflowed my soul. The dreadfullest representation of hell that I could frame in my mind could not move me. I apprehended that I should die that day, my fever being extreme, yet my soul was a heaven: I had, as it were, a view of paradise. Never did I imagine that it was possible for a soul at death to be so divested of fear, and have a hope so full of immortality. O how full was my heart of love, peace, and joy! I scarcely felt any pain, my comforts were so strong! At another time I expressed myself nearly in these words: I see more and more the love of my adorable Jesus. I see him full of grace and truth. I have power given me to commit myself singly to his disposal, that his excellent wisdom may be my guide. Temptations are frequently helps to me. They keep me awake and stir me up to courage, diligence, and prayer.—I have greater communion with the world of spirits than ever; and seem often to have sweet fellowship with the saints in paradise. The invisible world seems very nigh, and I often think myself on the very borders of it. Surely now I taste of the powers of the world to come, and feast on the tree of life, which is for the healing of the nations. O God, my soul doth praise thee; for thou has redeemed me from sin. Glory be to thee for ever! Hallelujah!

At another time I said, I am this morning fully assured of honour, glory, and immortality. I feel a kind of heaven in general, and in prayer I have very wonderful displays of the love of God. I hide me in the dust while I cry out, O God, thou hast wrought all these works in me! I am nothing! Christ is all! No tongue can tell what abasement I have felt: even while writing, I have been obliged to prostrate myself on the floor, and water it with tears of joy. In the morning I thought that I should die. Instantly I felt this scripture applied, "Thou shalt no more drink of the cup of trembling." I believed, and worshipped the Lord. At another time I cried out, O the sweet fellowship I have with the Father and the Son!—My soul has been a heaven for some days. Surely a small degree beyond my present experience would quite overcome me. I felt so much, that I was constrained to

pray to the Lord to summon me away, that I might for ever embrace my glorified Redeemer. I must observe that these strong consolations directly followed my deliverance from extreme sufferings.

I must not omit to mention that I had many answers to prayer in the course of this year ; and comfortable scriptures were applied at times to my suffering heart : especially toward the close of my sore afflictions. The Lord began my deliverance with the application of this scripture in prayer : " Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away !" I had then seemingly a view of paradise, and prayed like a man of another world. I find two kinds of prayer in myself. One is an impetuous, violent crying out for the blessings I seek ; there is much of nature in this. The other is plaintive, weeping prayer, coming from a broken, bleeding, loving heart ; there is much of the Divine unction in this. I never set apart a day of prayer and fasting, to implore any mercy for myself, the Church, or the nation, but I had some gracious answer.

With respect to my employment this year, I once or twice read and prayed to a few people at the place where I lived : visited all the sick that I could, and endeavoured to be as useful as possible. I had many trials from the deadness and unfaithfulness of the people here, and shed many tears on their account. One day while I was bemoaning the deadness and departure of some of them, the Lord graciously answered me with the following words : " Delight thou in the Lord, and verily thou shalt be fed." I wrote many letters to ministers and others, the success of which will only be known when God shall make up his jewels. After the Lord had delivered me out of my sore distress, and in faithfulness to his promise given me to overcome, I went to London for some weeks, and there lived a kind of angelic life. I frequently went to hospitals and prisons, and exhorted and prayed with the patients, &c. I spent most of the day in visiting the sick and tempted, and on Sundays I used to reprove all the Sabbath-breakers and swearers that I met with. It was in the month of August, 1767, that God enabled me to preach from a text to my little company. He gave me much encouragement, so that from this day I began to lay aside my reading. At times I was very sorely tried on account

of preaching, and have been near giving it up. Wisdom and memory were wonderfully given me, and I laboured to improve my talent. I must here make a remark respecting the erroneous conclusions that those draw from our being made pure in heart, that it swells the soul with pride, and supersedes the merits of Christ. Alas! poor souls, they do err, not knowing this state by experience. Who is so blind as the Lord's servant: as he that is perfect? I loathe myself more and more. The more I know and love my God, the more I loathe myself. The more obedient I am, the more unprofitable I seem to myself.—O my God, I am nothing; but thou art my all. Jesus is my hope and my boast. Glory be to my God!

On the 1st of January, 1768, I wrote nearly as follows: "O my God, how manifold have been thy mercies to me, the chief of sinners! Thou hast performed the mercy promised me, by delivering me out of the hands of all my enemies, that I might serve thee without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life. Thou hast given me to overcome, and a hope and belief that I shall no more drink of the cup of trembling. Thou art my God and my all. Glory be to thee for ever."

My next volume contains the most remarkable occurrences in the space of about eighteen months. A few particulars I shall subjoin:—Although God had most wonderfully delivered me, and my soul was a heaven, compared with former years, yet I had many sharp temptations interspersed with my consolations. On the 21st of February I wrote: This was a morning of sore temptation, till nine or ten o'clock. I most earnestly besought the Lord to deliver me, and cried very passionately to be secured from future evil. In the midst of my distress the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I acknowledged the truth of the scripture, and praised the Lord.

Feb. 28. This was a bitter morning. I was closely beset by my old enemy. My strength was wept away before breakfast. Surely I shall soon weep my last.—Known unto the Lord is all my trouble. Surely he will soon wipe away all tears from my eyes. One day, in the midst of my distress, Satan hissed these words into my ears, "Examine him with tortures and despitefulness, that

we may know his weakness, and prove his patience," Wisdom of Solomon ii, 19. And, indeed, he was permitted, at times, to make the experiment ; but I was graciously preserved. In the course of this year Lord —— and the Rev. Dr. B—— prevented my extending my little labours among the simple, teachable people. My friend was forbid giving me entrance into his house. My God ! lay it not to their charge. As I was not without sufferings, neither was I without extraordinary consolations. It was in one of these sweat seasons that I said, This morning Jesus crucified was right amiable to my soul. I saw that whatever I asked, I had. I laboured for language to debase myself, and worthily to magnify the Lord my Saviour. Surely I shall live with him for ever. I long to be in paradise. My time is surely at hand. The will of the Lord be done? Amen. Hallelujah to God and the Lamb ! At another time, when I was walking for my health, my soul anticipated the pleasures of Eden, and tasted the powers of the world to come. I had a happy assurance of my eternal endurance, and thought that my soul was on the verge of glory, honour, and immortality. At times I have been so filled with peace and joy that I could not refrain leaping and praising God on the road. Indeed, in the general, I enjoy a heaven on earth, and find a comfortable assurance that I never shall be blotted out of the book of life. During this period I was favoured with ability to help my neighbours, both in spirituals and temporals, which greatly increased my confidence in the Lord. One instance I will mention : T. O., belonging to my little society here, was arrested for a debt, contracted in his unconverted state. On their way to jail they stopped at an inn. His wife came to me, and desired that I would go to the inn, and give him some spiritual advice before he went away. Accordingly I went, and sung and prayed with him, his wife, and the bailiffs. After prayer, the Lord having touched the creditor's heart, she made a very gracious composition with me for him. I borrowed the money demanded, and paid it for him. On my way home I was in some pain for having run myself so much in debt : but, having lifted up my voice in prayer to God, I came home, and, to my very great comfort, found more than that sum left for me by a merchant.

This year I was enabled to preach in a friend's house two or three times a week, and to meet a few in class. I also catechised a few children, and spent my spare time in writing letters on Divine subjects. When I went to London I often visited Guy's Hospital, and the New Prison, and found much sweetness and success in my undertakings. At home sinners were convinced, some justified, and others sanctified by the grace of God. The news of this reaching you, sir, in London, made you invite me forth to a more entire devotedness to the service of souls. But being conscious that I had neither health, courage, gifts, nor grace for the work, I could not agree with your sentiments. The time was not fully come. However, I set myself to extirpate Sabbath-breaking near me, and what loving advice could not do I endeavoured to effect by applying to the magistrate. By these things, you may suppose, I brought upon myself ill will ; but the Lord stood by me, and suffered no one to do me any harm.—Glory be to his holy name !

This year I made an excursion into Gloucestershire, and was at Painswick for four or five weeks, where God was pleased to bless my simple conversation to several. Some received the pure love of God, and many were refreshed as well as my own soul. I seemed like a pure spirit while I was there, and stood on tiptoe to reach the fair regions of the skies.

The next volume of my experience contains about three years' account of God's dealings with me. During that time my temptations and sufferings were small, compared with what I had undergone in the preceding years. I was enabled to go on, preaching and visiting the sick, as usual. My greatest trials arose now from my timidity and weakness respecting preaching. Many times I have been ready to say, "I will speak no more in his name;" but I could not recede. It was come to this, "Wo is me if I preach not the Gospel." However the success that I met with, and the comfort I felt in my own soul, encouraged me to go on. About July, 1772, I went to Dover for the benefit of the salt water, and was enabled to supply the absence of a preacher in that town for some weeks. I found much life and liberty there, and believe that my labours were not in vain. As you were informed of my

proceedings, I received several letters from you, calling me forth to a more public work. But I could not consent. A full conviction of my ignorance, weakness, and bashfulness, satisfied me that I was not then called to it. My reasons satisfied you for that time ; but you told me you believed I should by and by. Soon after this I had an offer of a different kind, made me by the late earl of D——r, to be page of the presence to the queen ; but as I feared a post of honour, and at court too, I thankfully declined it in favour of my sister's husband. The reasons I assigned in my journal were, " I am here quiet, unfashionable, unnoticed, except by way of derision. I have also a few souls to care for, and, above all, one of my own : and I chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the favours, honours, and riches of a court. Adieu, vain world. Stand aloof with thy slighted charms. The Lord is my portion for ever. Hallelujah !"

On the 1st of Jan., 1773, I wrote as follows :—" As to my soul, I now enjoy a measure of the fruits of the Spirit. I love the Lord my God above all things here below ; but still I have reason to complain, as I do not now enjoy that love that casteth out fear, nor have I that firm persuasion that I shall overcome at the last." I remember some time ago, through very perplexing trials and temptations, I was led publicly to declare that I had lost the pure love of God. Scarce had I yielded to this, but I became too late sensible that my unbelief, at this juncture, had effected what I before only supposed had been done. The Lord has chastened my yielding to unbelief : for I have never since had a clear testimony that I was saved from sin. However, I have enjoyed almost a continual calm, and daily feel a longing for home.

Toward the middle of the year 1774 I was brought into a very weak and low state of body, which lasted for some months. I changed the air for near three months, and it pleased the Lord at last to restore me in some degree, and I returned to the office. It was during this infirmity that I had a remarkable dream, the purport of which I did not then understand ; but for which I had afterward great cause to praise the Lord. I thought I climbed up an exceeding high mountain ; so steep that I was obliged to cut steps in some places to get up. However, the journey

was not unpleasant to me. When I was at the top, I soon met with a cottage, which I entered, and began to speak to the poor labourer and his family. I thought they received the word with pure affection, and went around the mountain, and called all that they could together. I thought I preached to them, and settled a society there, and promised that I would get two of my brethren to supply my lack of service. I left them very happy. As I was returning, I thought, Surely there must be some mad bull upon this mountain, which will prevent my going home. Scarcely had this passed my mind, but I espied one in the way. However, I went to him, and he was not suffered to do me any harm. I got home safe, and was very happy; then I awoke, and behold it was a dream. I thought within myself, Shall I be called to go forth to preach the Gospel? How can this agree with an impression that I have had these several years, that I should die in my thirty-fifth year? It was then explained to me that I should, in that year, die to all worldly things, and be entirely devoted to the service of God and his Church. Some months after, all this came to pass, as the sequel will show.

These two or three years past my employment has been expounding the Scripture three times a week; meeting a class, and catechising children. I also set up an evening school for instructing the poor, miserable lime-burners' children, and prevailed with three of my society to take it in turns with me. We taught them reading and writing, &c., and found most of them books, and I instructed them from time to time in the principles of religion. As my income was small, Providence raised up friends to bless and favour my design. There was a prospect of much good, and many would have had cause to bless God for the undertaking, had not their wicked parents, in spite of all remonstrance, allowed them to run away to play, and thereby frustrate our design. Another thing I undertook with a good design, which kept me very poor, involved me in debt, and in time hurt my soul. I began to study and practise physic for the good of the poor, hoping thereby to have access to sick beds, and to be instrumental to the good of their souls. I procured an electrical machine, learned to bleed, and laid in a large assortment of medi-

cines. The Lord most wonderfully prospered my undertaking. The deaf, the halt, the withered, and many others diseased, received a cure under my hands. This success brought me many patients. Their cases required me to study, and the remedies exhausted my pocket, so that I became so perplexed for want of time, and also (notwithstanding many remarkable assisting providences) for want of sufficient recruits to support the undertaking, that my mind was very much hurt. But God, when I was in the very zenith of popular favour, most graciously removed me.—Indeed, both my mind and body were sorely harassed through much labour of different kinds. However, the Lord made me useful to his Church also, for several were convinced and converted, who will, I trust, be the crown of my rejoicing in a future day. I bore this burden for a long time; but at last, as the time drew near for the accomplishment of my dream, the burden became intolerable. My constitution was ruined, chiefly by the unwholesome air of the place where I lived. The physician told me that sitting at a desk would not do for me. Another eminent man told me that I was murdering myself. Riding was proposed to me as the most promising expedient to protract my life, and perhaps the only one. Several letters from friends, after two or three months' sufferings, brought me forth. The pious Mr. Samuel Wells (now in paradise) gave me the conquering stroke. "I do not know," says he, "but God hath said, Preach or perish." I then came to a resolution to forsake all, and set out with my staff. When I came to this conclusion, Satan set upon me for some weeks, with greater violence than ever, in order to stop me. Unknown are the sufferings I went through. Scarce had I two hours' sleep in the night, but all was literally weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. I used frequently to flee into a neighbouring wood, and in the most latent part spend several hours in bitter lamentations and cries to God for power and courage to give up all. At last, early one morning I arose, and with the best preparation I could, went to London. I there wrote my letter of resignation. When I had done, I fell down on my knees, and with the deepest gratitude praised my God for the power. I said with tears, O my God, I thank thee for having given me this place for so many

years ; and now thou requirest thine own again : lo ! here I present unto thee that which is thine, and cast my soul and body upon thy providence. This I spake with a heart deluged with grateful tears. Scarce had I made this oblation, but Satan tempted me to disbelieve the being of a God. I could not have known the strength of a fallen angel, had it not been for this sore temptation. I was almost an atheist till I arrived at Leeds, a few days before the conference. Soon after I got to my quarters there all my temptations vanished away, and my soul returned to its rest : and never since has it materially suffered from Satan. How was the dream verified that I had when I first began to seek the Lord ! So soon as I stripped the clothes off Satan, he got up in a rage and pursued me. So now being about to strip him of his subjects, he collected all his power and malice to make his last strong push at me ; but, blessed be the Lord my God, I still stand ! None but the great God can tell what I went through the two last months that preceded my going forth to preach the Gospel. Night and day my soul was upon the rack, and the sleep departed from my eyes. This I can truly say, the Lord hath thrust me out ; for never surely did such a concurrence of circumstances meet to manifest the will of God.

A few days before the conference, Mr. Pawson desired me to preach for him at Leeds, which I did to near five hundred people. I went into the pulpit with much fear and trembling, but was enabled to get through pretty well. All the time I was at Leeds I was exceedingly happy, and was engaged all day in spiritual exercises, in which I found myself much blessed.

On the 2d of August, 1775, I was admitted upon trial, and was sent into Oxfordshire with Samuel Wells and G. Shorter, both now in Abraham's bosom. As soon as I came to Witney, the first place in my circuit, I found a letter, requiring my presence in London. Here, to my infinite surprise, I found all my relations very cordial toward me, nor did any of them censure my conduct. It also pleased the Lord while I was here, to make a settlement upon me for life ; for which I have cause indeed to love and bless him for ever. In this circuit I was two years, and was kindly received by an affectionate people.

The circuit was a very hard one, having long journeys, and a great scarcity of fuel ; but the Lord was my support. Soon after I came into it, being at High Wycomb, a young woman lived somewhere there that I had seen, and been acquainted with. I got a guide, and set out one morning to inquire for her. A little while after she took me to see a young person who was very ill. I had a good time with her, and proposed coming at night to preach at that barren place. Consent was given, and the whole neighbourhood was invited : accordingly I preached, and the word was received with pure affection, and a society was soon formed. As I was going thither, my way lay up a hill, so high and steep that steps had been cut to accommodate the travellers, agreeable to my dream, previous to my coming forth. This very much strengthened me, and was like the sign given to Moses at Horeb, before he left Egypt. When the word began to be felt, and a society formed, the Rev. Mr. T. W——s, an Antinomian preacher, began to roar upon us like a bull ; but, according to my dream, he did us no harm.

The year after I laboured among as loving a people in the Gloucestershire circuit, and, blessed be God ! our labour was not in vain. They would have borne with me another year, but my constitution was so impaired that I could not bear so much riding, so I was obliged to be removed. I cannot omit making mention of the loving kindness of the Lord to me this year : having been seized with a bilious fever, which continued some weeks, my lot was cast at Stroud. Here I met with a tender nurse and kind friend, Mrs. Se——e, who removed me to her house, and, together with the rest of that loving family, showed me no little kindness ; so that by the help of a skilful apothecary, and the blessing of God, I was enabled in a few weeks to return to my labour. Two or three nights after I set out I was put into a damp bed at C—— : this immediately brought on my disorder again, and obliged me to retire to a farm house near Worcester, where I remained some weeks. But during this, and the whole time I have laboured in the Gospel, I have found much peace and comfort in my soul, which have enabled me to bear up under the hardships of an itinerant life.

At the next Leeds conference I was appointed for the

Bristol circuit. As soon as I heard my destiny my soul was in a furnace ; I wrote to you, sir, entreating you to send me anywhere rather than there. Bristol and Bath appeared so formidable that I was sorely distressed both in soul and body ; however, in spite of all my remonstrances, you continued in your resolution that I should go there. I continued in much distress for some days ; at last, while I was in prayer one evening, the Lord relieved my soul with these comfortable words, " Wait thou his time, so shall this night end in joyous day." Soon after I came to Bristol, I was obliged to retire for some weeks to Norton, where I met with uncommon kindness from those dear friends to the cause of God, Mr. and Mrs. Wait. Here I gave myself up to prayer, and gathered both bodily and spiritual strength. I spent this year with great satisfaction ; having most agreeable fellow-labourers. We saw a blessed work break out, and many souls were added to the societies. The people in this circuit were uncommonly affectionate, and I thought I should be glad to finish my course among them. The next year I was appointed for this circuit again, but had some heavy trials : a circumstance that happened at Bath greatly distressed my soul, and gave a general wound to the cause of God. However, the few last months that I was there, I enjoyed a heaven upon earth, and left them with great pain of mind. The last place I left was Almonsbury : a place that I had been at, for my health about a fortnight. Here I met with a tender affectionate friend that showed me every kindness for her Master's sake, and I came away with much sorrow.

At the Bristol conference, 1780, I was appointed for Manchester : when I came there my soul entered into great sufferings : the thoughts of my dear Bristol people, and the dread that I had upon my mind concerning the office which was laid upon me, as the assistant, quite drank up my spirits : however, by the grace of God, I set my shoulders to the work, and endeavoured to lay out my life and soul in his service. God was pleased to own me and my fellow labourer, so that between two and three hundred new members were received into the society, and there was a general revival throughout the circuit. When I came first into it I was quite a stranger to the complexion

of this people, and interpreted their shyness to strangers as a defect of love; but, however, I can say I found them a most affectionate, generous, steady people; and with tears in my eyes, I can add, they lie near my heart.

Soon after I began my work I found that my constitution could not bear the journeys, so I was obliged to call for help. You sent me another preacher, which afforded me the opportunity of being more useful to the circuit. I should have been very useful about Rochdale, had it not been for two or three members of that society, who required me to do what I could not, either in point of conscience or equity. They so prejudiced some of the simple people, and so broke my spirits, as well as hurt my body, that the work was entirely stopped; my intended expeditions to the neighbouring villages prevented, and I fear, many precious souls wounded, if not murdered, through their conduct. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge! Their conduct, and the harm that I saw they were likely to do, caused me to groan and weep on my bed; my very heart bled, and I poured out strong cries and tears to God to come to my help. I had very remarkable answers to prayer; and when I had settled this affair to the best of my power, and was on my return from Rochdale, I was conscientiously reviewing my conduct, as before God, to see if I had acted amiss in the affair; immediately these words came with a Divine unction to my soul:—

The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss.

On this I greatly rejoiced, and gave glory to God!

Some time in the winter I went to a neighbouring village, called Clodwick, consisting chiefly of colliers and weavers. I preached to a crowded room full, and with much comfort, and I believe many felt the word: I preached a second time with peace and pleasure. The third time I went I endeavoured to preach out of doors; but as Satan's kingdom began to suffer, (several being awakened and joined to the society,) he mustered up his forces, who, being armed with stones and noisy instruments, attacked us furiously. They gnashed on me with their teeth, and threw large coals and stones at me: I was obliged, after a time, to retire into the house, which I did

unhurt, and sung and prayed with a few serious people. When I set off for Oldham with some of my friends, the floods lifted up their voice ; they threw dirt and stones amain, yet only one woman was materially hurt, who received a dangerous cut in her head. We were obliged to commence an action against four or five of the rioters, or we must have been murdered, had we gone there again ; however, several of the people were received into society, and were filled with all peace and joy in believing. The lawsuit was compromised, and they now met in peace. I had also very severe trials from another quarter. When the new house was opened at Manchester, and I saw such large congregations, I suffered immensely through my timidity. Standing in that pulpit was to me like standing to be shot ; but, however, the gracious Lord brought me through the year.

At the Leeds conference I was appointed for Manchester again ; but fearing some extraordinary trials, and disapproving of some late things which had occurred ; I desired you to remove me to Birstal. You consented ; but my friends at Manchester were determined not to part with me till they had received an answer to a petition for my return. During this suspense I went to Liverpool.— Here I remained three weeks, and spent my time much to my profit and comfort, with a loving, generous people ; and I believe we were mutually profited by this interview.

When I returned to Manchester I received your letter fixing me for Birstal. Soon after this I repaired to my circuit, and met with much kindness from the people. This encouraged me to undertake some difficult things which my nature shrunk at. However, through the help of my God, I was brought through as well as I could expect. Although this is the most easy and suitable circuit for me, who cannot bear much riding, yet I find here enough to convince me it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom. But I enjoy vast peace of mind, and can appeal to God, that his glory, the good of the Church, and the eternal welfare of my own soul, are the grand objects I have daily in view.

Through the mercy of God, and the faithful concurrence of my fellow labourers, good has been done, and I have had the promise of a farther revival sealed on my

heart. It was on this wise:—After a shower of tears, when in private prayer at Daw-Green, I came down from my chamber, and joined the family in prayer. The power of God fell upon me, and I prayed as the Spirit gave me utterance. I prayed fervently for the circuit, and had a blessed revival before my eyes. I praised God by way of anticipation; being assured that he was about to work. The family felt the Divine unction, and I was so exhausted I could scarce get up from my knees.

I should not omit an unpromising circumstance that happened some time after I came into the circuit. Mr. F—r carried away a burning and shining light from Cross-Hall, and thereby deprived me of a blessed helper. I was invited to be with them on the day of their espousals, and never before knew such a blessed wedding. I now saw indeed that marriage is honourable in all; being instituted by God, in a state of innocence, and in the garden of paradise. May eternal happiness crown this devoted pair.

I must now draw to a conclusion, praising and blessing my God, whose mercy, love, and faithfulness have been so wonderfully manifested in my pilgrimage. I still find my whole soul in the work. But my spirits are far too active for my body. My constitution is very weak, and, like Saul's armour to David, is a sore clog to my spirit. I hope to live and die in the cause of my adorable Redeemer and his beloved people; I fervently pray that I may end my life in his work. My soul is happy! Divine transport possesses my breast, and Jesus is my daily theme: my all in all for ever and ever! With pleasure and confidence I still declare to all the world,—

Ye all may know that God is true,
Ye all may feel that God is love.

In this spirit I hope to remain till the mercy of God, and the sole merits of my adorable Redeemer, shall introduce my blushing spirit into the society of angels and saints, to swell the sound of Jesus' fame, and praise my God for ever and ever. I am, Rev. sir, your most affectionate son in the Gospel. J. V.

P. S. Thus far I wrote before the conference. Since

then I have been appointed for Birstal again. I have the prospect of much suffering here, through an unfortunate affair. But all is well. My conscience is undefiled. The Lord is before my eyes, and, by the grace of God, I will hold fast my integrity unto the end.

We took in above two hundred new members last year, and we have a fair prospect in some places this year. In the midst of great anguish of spirit (through the troubles of the Church) I had one morning the most gracious visit from heaven that I have had for some years. O how I laboured in familiar prayer with God that I might then finish my work! "O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Even so. Amen. Hallelujah!

MR. THOMAS PAYNE.

TO REV. JOHN WESLEY.

Waterford, March 16, 1781.

REV. SIR,—At your request I undertake a work of which, God knows, I am ashamed. For when I look back on my past tempers, words, and actions, I am really amazed that I am yet alive: for surely I have deserved the lowest place in hell. I was created to be happy; but I chose the means of misery: and firmly believe myself the most unworthy of all that body of preachers with whom I am connected.

I was born at Nailsworth, near Stroud, in Gloucestershire, in the year 1741, of very pious and upright parents. They were, by profession, Particular Anabaptists: and they lived in the fear and love of God. My father laboured to train up his children in the same—seconding his precepts by his examples and prayers. he kept up family devotion twice a day, reading a chapter or psalm first. And twice a day, early and late, he

spent a considerable time with God in secret. Thus he walked with God himself, and incited his children to follow him. He never spoiled the child by sparing the rod, but always remonstrated, and then corrected. And his well timed corrections seldom failed to leave some good impressions upon us.

On his deathbed he gave me his dying charge, with a prayer, which I believe God sealed in heaven. As my mother was weeping, and wishing that God would spare him a little longer, he said, "Would you wish me so much evil as to be any longer detained from the joys of heaven? Poor Tom (meaning me) will lose a good friend to-morrow, about two o'clock." The next day, about that time, he cried out, "Lord, how long are thy chariot wheels coming?" and within a few moments after sweetly fell asleep.

I heartily thank God for a pious education, which laid a foundation for a future reformation. From the earliest period of recollection, I found the strivings of God's Spirit. I formed many good resolutions from time to time; but quickly broke through them all; although when I was ten years old I prayed much, and desired to be truly religious. I was left under the care of a currier and leather-dresser, who carried on the shoe-making business. But, being under little restraint, and continually exposed to bad company, I gave way to youthful follies, till I left my place, without asking leave; and till my friends sent me to London. Being now among religious people who belonged to Mr. Whitefield, my good desires revived, and produced a considerable amendment in the whole tenor of my actions.

But I did not at all know myself. And having an inclination to see the world, I enlisted in the year 1759 in General Burgoyne's light regiment of dragoons. But, upon examination I was found not quite tall enough, and so was discharged from them. Being ashamed to return to my friends, I enlisted in the service of the East India Company: and was soon sent out in the Triton store-ship, for the island of St. Helena, on the south of Africa. I saw the island in a dream just before I enlisted. We sailed from Gravesend in December, 1759, under con-

voy of the Rippon man-of-war, and in company with the Anslow East Indiaman, which afterward parted from us in a gale of wind. A French frigate bore down upon us in the Bay of Biscay, doubtless taking us for merchantmen. When we were preparing to engage, I was troubled at first, knowing I was not fit to die: but I soon comforted myself with the unchangeable decree. After firing a few shot, the frigate bore away. The Rippon chased and took her. But we saw our convoy no more, till some time after she came to St. Helena.

We had now a week's calm. It then blew a hurricane for three weeks without intermission. All our masts were loosened, and several sets of sails torn in a thousand pieces. Both our chain and hand pumps were kept going for a month, without any intermission. During this time one poor man fell overboard, and cried out, "A boat, for God's sake," and sunk. A second fell down from the mast on the quarter deck, and dashed out his brains. A third going up to furl the main sail, must have shared the same fate, but that as he was falling, he caught and hung by his hands and feet, to the clew-garling of the sail. But he did not give God the glory. Afterward, as we were sailing near the equator, on a calm sea, he was scraping the ship's side, standing on one of the half parts, and, as usual, damning his own eyes and limbs. The captain hearing him, said, "You should not curse and swear in that manner. The half part may turn with you, and you may be drowned with an oath in your mouth." But he swore on. In less than five minutes the half part did turn; he fell and rose no more. The captain instantly put the ship about: but it was all in vain! This alarmed me a little: but then I thought, "It was decreed," and was easy again.

The day we arrived at St. Helena I had another shock. Two men were swimming near our ship. A very large shark (which I verily believe had followed our ship four hundred miles) bit at one of them and missed him. He cried out, "A shark!" but too late, for his comrade was immediately bit in two. Indeed we had men killed continually. Some getting drunk, rolled down precipices; others fell into the sea. And I verily think half of the

army and half of the other inhabitants of the island, did not live out half their days, which often gave me very serious thoughts of the uncertainty of human life.

My seriousness was increased by an extraordinary occurrence, which I simply relate just as it was. One night, as I was standing sentinel at Mr. M——'s door, I heard a dreadful rattling, as if the house was all shaking to pieces, and tumbling down about my ears. Looking toward it I saw an appearance, about the size of a six week's calf, lying at the door. It rose, came toward me, looked me in the face, passed by, returned again, and went to the door. The house shook as before, and it disappeared. A few days after, our innkeeper, Mr. M——, told the officer of the guard that the same night Mrs. M—— died, he with eight persons more sitting up, observed the house shake exceedingly: that they were greatly surprised, and searched every room, but to no purpose: that not long after there was a second shaking, as violent as the former. That a while after the house shook a third time; and just then Mrs. M—— died.

I now really desired to serve God. But I had none to help me forward. I longed for some religious acquaintance; and every year, when the store ship came from England, I diligently inquired whether any good men came in it. At length one arrived who had been educated at the Foundry school in London. And he was once serious, but had turned again to folly. However, he was now desirous to return to God. I found likewise another young man who had an earnest desire to save his soul: and we three agreed to serve God together. I now fasted and prayed, and having a little larger income, endeavoured to help my neighbours. But this quickly puffed me up with pride till I was suffered to fall into outward sin. God now humbled me indeed: I abhorred myself, and saw the necessity of a deeper work, in order to my being happy, either in this world or in the world to come.

My companions and I were greatly strengthened by an uncommon trial that befell us soon after. We frequently went out, at night, to pray by the side of a mountain. One night, as we were walking together, and talking of the things of God, I heard a noise, and saw some-

thing in the form of a large bear pursuing me closely. My hair stood on end, and, as we were walking arm in arm, I suddenly pulled both my companions around with me. They both saw him, and one of them fainted away. It then reared up itself upon its hind legs in the air. I said, "Satan, we are come hither to serve God: and we will do it in spite of thee, and all the devils in hell." Instantly it sunk into the earth: we then prayed upon the very spot: and soon found ourselves strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

In about a week after I spoke unadvisedly with my lips. It cut me to the heart. I went to a quarry at the foot of the mountain, fell prostrate on the earth, and cried out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the guilt and power of sin?" But I was a strong Calvinist, and that kept me from the blessing a long time, waiting for the irresistible call, and thought it horrid presumption to venture upon Christ till God compelled me by his almighty arm. Thus I waited till I met with a German author, who convinced me of the absolute necessity of "striving to enter in at the strait gate; of taking the kingdom of heaven by violence; of laying hold of God's strength," in order to make peace with him: of venturing my spirit, soul, and body, with all my sins, sorrows, cares, and all my wants on the absolute mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

With a full purpose of doing this, I called my companions to the old spot to prayer. And while I was praying and wrestling for Christian liberty,—

Panting for everlasting rest,
And struggling into God,

I cried out, with an uncommon ecstasy of joy and astonishment, "O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise!" Being divinely assisted, I believed with my heart unto righteousness: on which God shed abroad his love therein, and gave me the Spirit of adoption, crying, Abba, Father; which Spirit witnessed with my spirit that I was a child of God. I then could not refrain from declaring what God had done for my soul. I cried out to those about me, "Why cannot you praise God with me and for me? I am so filled with the love

of God, methinks I am just ready to fly up to heaven with my very body."

But I had a Calvinian library, which I often read. And hence I imbibed that miserable notion that it was absolutely necessary every believer should come down from the mount. Hence I was persuaded that I must lose my first love; that I must doubt of my justification, which those wretched casuists lay down as one great mark of sincerity. For want of knowing better, I listened to these till I lost the witness of the Spirit. I then fell into doubts concerning my justification; nay, and concerning the being of a God. I sunk deeper and deeper, till I got to my old German author again. I then found that I must strive, not only to gain, but to hold fast the witness of the Spirit, and the hope of the Gospel: yea, that I must dispute every inch of ground with the world, the flesh, and the devil. Thus convinced, I went with renewed repentance to the throne of grace. And I found the fountain open. At two several times it pleased God to give so strong a discovery of his love to my soul that it was then impossible to admit the least shadow of a doubt.

I now thought I never could be moved, God had made my hill so strong. I hired a little dwelling. I got a large library of books. I gathered more and more of the soldiers to join with me in fasting, praying, reading, singing, and every other means whereby we might edify each other. I began to exhort, and many were convinced of sin; some were justified, some English backsliders were restored, who died happy in God. But soon after I was preferred to a higher rank, which was a means of my forsaking God. To please man I did violence to my conscience, and grieved the Holy Spirit of God. But I found no peace herein. Conviction returned, and I was on the brink of despair. Many times in a day I threw myself on the bed, in unspeakable anguish of mind, seeing no door of hope, but taking it for granted I should breathe my last in horrible fear. For about a year I could not believe even the being of a God. I thought if there were such a God as the Scripture speaks of, he would either have saved or damned me before now. I do not know that I slept one whole night, for thirteen months together: nor, indeed, one whole hour, without some dreadful dream,

presaging the wrath to come. To complete my distress, and make me perfectly miserable, the ungodly, who denied, and the Pharisees, who despised all heart religion, were continually laughing me to scorn: crying, "Ha! ha! So would we have it. Where is our reprover now?"

One man on the parade (to provoke me) called upon the devil to d—n his Maker. Immediately a horror fell upon him, and from that hour he had no rest, day or night, till he made an open confession to a magistrate that seven years before he had murdered a soldier, whose apparition followed him wherever he was. Upon this confession judicially repeated, he was condemned to die. When under sentence he sent for me, and begged I would converse and pray with him, which (with the leave both of the governor and chaplain) I did, till the day of his execution. He then declared, "This is the best day I ever saw. This is my wedding day. I am married to Christ, and I am going to heaven to praise him to all eternity."

I was now promoted again. I had five different offices, and a large revenue therefrom. But as business increased, religion wore off; till (to avoid running into more sin) I married. My wife's mother was one of the most pious women in the island. But my wife's religion consisted in going to church, and then running a continual round of pleasure, of eating and drinking, dressing, playing, dancing, and singing. Indeed we both swam down the stream together; for I was afraid to think; I did not dare to meet my own conscience; and endeavoured to stifle my own convictions with business and with frantic mirth. Yet sometimes I could not help thinking. And my convictions were then so keen that I was many times under strong temptations to put an end to my life. Perhaps I should have done it, but for a dream which I had a little before. I thought I saw myself standing on the summit of a frightful precipice; whence I was suddenly hurled down headlong through the air, expecting every moment to be dashed in pieces; when I was turned into a white dove, and flew up again.

About this time I saw, at a friend's house, two volumes extracted from Mr. Law's works, and a volume of your sermons. Hence my convictions returned stronger than ever.

I sincerely and deeply lamented my grievous fall: my heart was broken in pieces for my repeated and aggravated sins against so good a God. And I sincerely prayed that he would send me any kind of affliction which would bring me back to himself. I saw prosperity had ruined me, and cared not what I suffered, so I might once again love and serve God. And I referred it wholly to him to use whatever means he saw fit in his adorable providence. At the same time I had a vehement desire to hear once more the genuine Gospel of Christ.

One night I started up in my sleep, and waked my wife, saying, "Peggy, I shall be obliged to leave you, and go to England." She said, "It is only a foolish dream: go to sleep again." I endeavoured so to do, but could not, this being so strongly impressed on my mind. Not long after I disobliged some of my superiors by the just discharge of my duty. In consequence of this I received orders to return to England; the man I saw in my dream pushing me off the precipice being the very man who bore false witness against me out of fear of the governor, who cursed and drove away those that came to give evidence in my favour. I saw the hand of God herein, and acquiesced in his providence.

I came to England, and preferred a petition to the honourable East India Company. But they did not answer it; as indeed I had not with me the proper evidences to support it. I left my wife and children behind, and she in a state of pregnancy. She did not desire to come with me; nor did I then desire that she should. I remained in London, waiting for the arrival of some of my evidences till I had spent almost all my money, having only a few shillings left. I could not now tell what to do, as I had not one friend in London, till hearing of you, sir, I found a desire to have some conversation with you. I went to the Foundry, but instead of you I met Mr. Jaco. I told him my situation and circumstances. He said, "I can do nothing for you." I asked if he knew of any under clerk's place that I could get till Providence cleared my way. He said, "No." I left him; but was not humbled enough yet for God to lift me up.

I said to myself, I have been a soldier, and I will be so again. I could not murmur nor repine; having a deep

sense of my backsliding from God, and being fully convinced that although his ways are often past finding out, yet he does all things well, and for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. I enlisted in the fifteenth regiment of foot, and was immediately made clerk of the regiment. I should have been farther preferred, but I was too religious: I was not like other men. Indeed I do not know that we had three men in the whole regiment who pretended to any religion at all. I had now again a few opportunities of calling sinners to repentance. I went to Nailsworth upon a furlough, and began exhorting the people to turn to God. I did the same at Stroud; then at Cirencester, and afterward at other places. Here my former sentiments were shaken, and I began to halt between two opinions. At length the gracious providence of God brought me to Leeds, in Yorkshire. Here I found such a large body of affectionate people as I never saw before. And some of them desired me to preach; but my officers threatened me that if I did I should be tried by a court martial. And I still doubted my call to preach. So I determined to take this method, never to preach unless invited to it; and then to observe whether there was any fruit.

Soon after, one of our soldiers told Mrs. Walsh that they had a preacher in their regiment. She sent for me, and desired me to give an exhortation. I did so, and, contrary to my expectation, my officers were so far from punishing me, that they gave me all the liberty I could desire. And it pleased God to employ me as an instrument of awakening and converting several souls. I preached many times in the streets of Leeds. Mr. Mitchell then sent for me, and asked me, "For whom do you preach?" I said, "For Jesus Christ, in order to convert sinners to him." He invited me to preach in your preaching house, which I did many times. And I frequently went into the circuit for him, and Mr. Robert Roberts, who were glad to have sinners converted to God, whatever instruments he was pleased to make use of. And it was here that, by reading and considering yours, Mr. Fletcher's, and Mr. Sellon's works, I was entirely delivered from the whole hypothesis of absolute predestination. And so I am firmly persuaded will every sensible man be who has a real de-

sire to know the whole truth of God, and then gives them a fair reading, with frequent and fervent prayer.

It was now that the thought of my wife and children lay upon my mind. And I saw no way, either for me to escape from the army, or them from St. Helena. But nothing is too hard for God. He first made a way for me. My colonel demanding thirty guineas for my discharge, it was soon raised and paid. Being now once more a free man, I desired to join with the people called Methodists. I saw (to begin with smaller things) that wherever they came they promoted, 1. Cleanliness, industry, frugality, and economy. 2. Loyalty, conscientious subjection to the king, and all that are in authority : and 3. Real, vital religion, which was well nigh banished from the earth.

I was received upon trial at the Leeds conference, in the year 1772. Thence I was sent to London, where the sensible Methodists were so kind as to bear with my weaknesses, and they were not a few. I bless God that I was stationed here for my improvement. And even here, it pleased God, that my labour was not in vain. You was then pleased to send me to Ireland to take off my rough military edge; and to break me thoroughly to the work on the rough mountains of the north. The damp, dirty, smoky cabins of Ulster were a good trial for me for the present. But what makes double amends for all these inconveniences to any preacher who loves the work of God, is, that our people here are, in general, the most zealous, lively, affectionate Christians we have in the kingdom.

When I had been little above a year in Ireland, my wife, who was before unwilling to leave home, as well as afraid of a sea voyage, and of venturing into the northern climate, wrote me word that her father and mother were dead, and that she was willing to leave St. Helena, and not afraid, either of a sea voyage, or of a cold climate. I informed you of this; and you was pleased to make application to the East India Company, who generously ordered my family to be brought to England, with every needful accommodation, at their own charge. By the blessing of God they arrived safe. You was pleased to send my little boy to Kingswood school, and my little girl to Publow, and to send me word not to take thought

or care about them. After awhile you sent over my wife to me. This has proved an unspeakable blessing to her. She has been convinced of sin, converted to God, and, I trust, made pure in heart.

As to myself, I have been many times so unfaithful to the grace and gifts wherewith God has intrusted me, that I abhor myself in dust and ashes, as an unprofitable servant. Yet this I can say from the ground of my heart, I am not at all careful where or how long I live in this world, so I may answer the end of my being ; so I may have the testimony of my conscience that I do all to the glory of God. For I know that to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I fear God, and uniformly endeavour to work righteousness. I believe that God is both able and willing to cleanse me from all unrighteousness : and I lie before him as clay in the hands of the potter, to be just what he would have me to be : as holy and as happy as my nature and state can bear. I am not afraid of being too holy ; but I believe it is my privilege to be all holy, in the very complexion of my soul, in all my tempers, words, thoughts, and actions. I am convinced that grace is stronger than sin, and that Christ is stronger than the devil ; and that Gospel liberty implies a deliverance from the guilt, power, and nature of sin ; into peace, life, love, and holiness. I can say, farther, that though I do not yet fully enjoy these inestimable blessings, yet God is pleased to own my weak labours, so that more and more sinners are converted to God every time I go around the circuit.

And now, what shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits that he has done unto me ? I can only praise him as long as I live, and be telling of all his wondrous works. Praise the Lord, then, O my soul ! and let all within me praise his holy name !

Dear sir, blot out or keep in just what you please of this narrative. And in so doing you will oblige

Your son in the Gospel,

THOMAS PAYNE.

